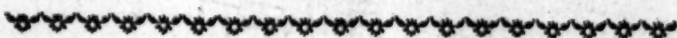




MASQUERADES;

O R,

WHAT YOU WILL.



MASSACHUSETTS

WHAT YOU WILL



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MASQUERADES;

OR,

WHAT YOU WILL.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF ELIZA WARWICK, &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. I.



D U B L I N:

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RECEIVED

NEW YORK

ATTEST

IN WITNESS



RECEIVED

BRITISH MUSEUM

MASQUERADES,

&c.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Mortimer-Hall.

MY amiable friend judged very properly in supposing my time would be so much engrossed by the tumult which generally attends the weddings of *great people*, that I should hardly find a moment to dedicate to the more pleasing calls of my Louisa.—It has really been the case:—my sprightly sister has shared much of the public admiration, and was so exceedingly caressed that she had hardly time to breathe; and I must have been of her parties, or have appeared deficient either in the exact rules of politeness, or (what is worse) in those of tenderness for one who deservedly claims every affectionate sentiment from me.

How easily are the most volatile spirits cast down!—Who could have conceived, that changing a name, and travelling eighty or ninety miles from the smoaky region of London, to a place that seems formed in a "*Prodigality of Nature*," would have worked any effect on the naturally gay disposition of our Caroline!—and yet, believe me, for the first two or three days after our arrival here, she appeared dejected, melancholy, and so uneasy as to be often in tears. However, she is once more herself, which we are

all much pleased at, as the *penserosa* airs of a *madona* by no means become her.

Our journey was a very agreeable one. Lord Mortimer carries his head at least two inches higher than usual: he seems to be quite happy, and never glances at his *cara* without turning his eyes about, to see who envies him. He certainly shines as a Benedick, nor does the part of Beatrice fail of occurring to my remembrance, when I observe Caroline's droll, yet good-natured manner of treating him. Hearts linked by affection so firmly as theirs have been from their first acquaintance, give us every reason to hope that their felicity is built on a permanent foundation, and that they will be an example of conjugal happiness to a licentious age, that requires such a pattern.

Tho' we are advancing hastily towards the end of autumn, this place is yet beautiful—The prospects around are uncommonly fine—the house itself is large and commodious—the construction very old fashioned, which I do not dislike—Your antique buildings always fill my soul with a pleasing kind of awe.

Our neighbours are in general very agreeable: we are daily surrounded by a number of *belles* and *beaux*; among the former are the two Miss Polworth's (who were much celebrated last winter), and Mrs. Armiger, whom you so greatly admired, at a card-party we were invited to, one night at Mrs. Nelson's. Sir James Westbrook, Lord Budenall, and Mr. Montague, are at present visitants of Lord Mortimer. The gentlemen hunt, shoot, and join the ladies in cards, dancing, walking, &c. Lord and Lady Mortimer intend to remain in the country till after Christmas; but my brother, whose attendance in town will be necessary very shortly, goes up in a fortnight. Lady Pemberton and I accompany him. Our society will be broke up:—however, in so excellent a neighbourhood, the dear inhabitants of this mansion will find many agreeable substitutes.



A para-

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A paragraph in your last hints that you are *incommoded by a slight indisposition*. "*Slight*" I flatter myself it is; or, surely, my Louisa would not act in so ambiguous a manner! Inform me by the first opportunity how you are, I beseech you—While my amiable friend labours under the least anxiety, occasioned either by pain of mind or body, happiness must be ever a stranger to the bosom of,

Her inviolably affectionate,

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Sommerville-House.

THE arrival of my Julia's letter quickly dispersed the gloom which is a constant attendant on suspense and expectation! Impatiently had I been waiting for a few lines, to raise my depressed spirits, which illness had sunk to their lowest ebb; and was beginning to despair, when the much wished-for packet was put into my hands.

And has our Caroline really given up all claim to the name of Herbert!—Sincerely do I give you joy—and participate in the opening prospects of pleasure to the Pemberton family. May she taste every bliss the state she has so lately embraced is capable of bestowing! Tho' naturally gay her disposition, it never can make her less sensible of the invaluable treasure Heaven has allotted her in the worthy Lord Mortimer. He is truly deserving of the jewel he possesses; she is an acquisition he may with great justice be vain of.

Do not, my Julia, suffer your attention to be too deeply engrossed by the scenes of dissipation with

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which you are at present surrounded: bestow a frequent thought upon your sick, and I may add unfortunate friend; for such in my present situation I can with justice stile myself.—The hours of real happiness, which I should have experienced at being present at the late interesting and joyful occasion, I have been deprived of, by a seeming combination of disagreeable incidents. My indisposition when last I wrote was trifling,—it has since increased; a slow fever hangs upon me, which seems pleased with its habitation, and unwilling to quit it: nor can I hope for relief while I remain involved in an unhappy affair, that preys continually on my spirits, and subjects me to reproaches which your Louisa's heart can ill brook.—I will not say more upon that head by this opportunity. I never take up a pen but suspicion haunts every breast, that Mr. Melmoth is the only one to whom in my present situation I would address myself. Ah, my Julia! repeated hours of misery do I suffer on that unfortunate man's account—have I not cause to wish I had never seen him?—And yet I owe him every grateful sentiment for his attachment to me——But enough of this subject—it makes me feel too sensibly;—nor can I bend my pen to any other for the present—so adieu, my Julia! and believe me

Your faithful

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

WE left Mortimer-Hall four days ago—with what sensations, your delicate heart will suggest to you.

How

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How little does my Louisa know, even after so long an intercourse of friendship, the soul of her Julia!—Why would she conceive so ill of me, as to imagine that dissipation can make me forget her for a single moment? My heart sighed for the pen, when horrid parade and ceremony denied me the use of it; and most frequently were my thoughts wandering to Sommerville-House, whilst pomp, magnificence, and gaiety, unsuccessfully strove to engage my attention.

That you are unhappy, my amiable friend! is evidently seen—you, who never till the last eighteen months of your life knew more of pain than the name, are now become an absolute valetudinarian:—a circumstance which cannot fail of inspiring with the most dreadful alarms every breast that sympathizes in your fate.—From whence, Louisa, are we to derive the cause? I will endeavour to guess, and inform you, who must be ignorant yourself of it, or, surely, you would not have denied me your confidence!

Amongst the various reasons that have obtruded on my imagination, I will tell you *that* which strikes me as the most probable.

You may remember the affection that subsisted between you and a *certain person* now on the other side of the Alps; a *fraternal* one you both called it, but whether absence has not made you sensible of its deserving another appellation, is a doubt with me. I thought I discovered that your mutual regard originated from something more tender than the esteem we usually entertain for a brother or a sister.—I believe you are awakened from your error; and, finding yourself oddly situated between your engagement with Mr. Melmoth (which commenced long ago) and the partiality you feel for our newer acquaintance, occasions the conflict that renders you unhappy: and when the mind is disturbed, must not the frame which contains it be a sufferer?

Sure, there was something remarkable enough in your first meeting with our amiable traveller! You must remember it—whether you do or not, I

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will gratify myself in relating it, as I have often done, to you.—If you are interested in behalf of the party I am going to mention, as I suspect, you will not yawn over the paragraph—nor join the poet in thinking “*nothing so tedious as a twice-told tale.*”

The difficulty we had to prevail on Sir George Sommerville to permit me to pass the last winter with us in London, you certainly never can forget. Soon after our arrival here we went one night to see Garrick play Hamlet: at the latter end of the first act, a *cavalier* entered the next box to ours, whose handsome person instantly attracted the notice of the admiring surrounders. I never saw elegance, dignity, and ease, so happily blended in any form. He appeared unconscious of, or above regarding, the general adulation paid him by the eyes of the audience. The Ladies that my mother *chaperon'd*, were by no means insensible to the charms of this incognito.

“*Mon Dieu!*” cried Caroline, “he is a divinity!” and, I make no doubt, would have been so loud in her encomiums, as to have convinced him *that she had taste*, if Lady Pemberton had not in due time called her to order. Caroline’s curiosity, once gratified with a sight of this *Adonis*, gave her no further disturbance, and her attention afterwards was fixed on the hero of the stage. Not so Louisa! I took notice that her looks were otherwise bestowed, and, to say the truth, they sought an object worthy of them.

A night or two after, at Lady Denley’s assembly, the duke of Northington brought up the stranger, and introduced him to Lady Pemberton by the title of Sir Charles Montague. He begged leave to be permitted to pay his respects in Portman-Square, and the next evening his name was announced in my mother’s drawing-room.

The visible preference he gave my friend soon testified that his admiration of her exceeded, by many

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many degrees, that which she favoured him with; and every day producing accumulated merit in both, heightened their well-founded affection for each other.

Examine your heart, Louisa, and tell me whether I have divined the real cause of your uneasiness?—I hope I have; for then, in my opinion, it rests entirely with yourself to discard the load of anxiety which with its cankerous quality undermines your health, and renders you so wretched.—Indeed, my Louisa, you must discard it.—for the sake of your Julia, whose feelings are so interwoven with yours, that if you are unhappy, I must be miserable.—Adieu, and think me ever

Affectionately yours,

J. HERBERT.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Semmerville-House.

AM I really blessed enough to have occupied so much of my Julia's attention? I was ungrateful to have entertained a moment's doubt of it; your amiable heart is ever alive to the voice of friendship. Can she who shares yours so largely, dare to own herself unhappy? Oh no! supported by that pleasing thought, every pain must wear a trivial aspect.

I well recollect the agreeable evening you remind me of, which, as you observe, presented to our sight Sir Charles Montague—Your conjectures with regard to the *tendre* that you think subsisted between us, are very wrong.—If I know my own heart, it is entirely free from any other attachment but that of esteem for him. Were he to return to

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us the same fascinating object he was when he left England—and again distinguish me by the same flattering attention he formerly paid me,—my situation might indeed be rather dangerous.—But there is little probability of that: he is destined to make some person happy, whose superior merit renders her better deserving of worth like his——Your kind prepossession leads you to imagine, that every one regards Louisa with your eyes!

Do not, my sweet friend, think me backward in reposing any confidence in you—I know nothing of myself if I possess a sentiment I wish you to be a stranger to.—Do you deal as candidly by me? Is not your real opinion of Mr. Lenox kept too close a secret?

You profess a regard for him; but is that alone sufficient to satisfy the man you mean to give your hand to? Your behaviour to the amiable Lenox is, indeed, quite inconsistent with that candour and sincerity, which, in every other point of your conduct, shew themselves the principles of your heart. I am surprised, I confess, how one of your sensibility can affect such *seeming* inattention to his merit. Fictitious only it can be; I would not think so erroneously of your judgment, as to suppose you spoke your real sentiments of him. The truth is, we are all fond of exercising the share of *despotism* that is allowed us during the day of *flirtation*, and too often use it to a wrong purpose. Follow not our weak sex in this point, dear girl, and convince the world how much you despise the paltry superiority your present situation gives you over a worthy man. Assure yourself, your generosity before marriage will render him doubly sensible of the obligation he owes to you, and will more firmly rivet him yours, after this important affair has taken place. He will then be convinced, from the contempt you shewed for power, while privileged to exert it, of your readiness to resign *that* which you no longer will

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will judge to be your prerogative.—I am summoned to attend Sir George.—I remain, my Julia,

Much yours,

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

YOU have wounded me to the soul, my amiable friend, by supposing me addicted to a species of coquetry that I detest. It is now time for me to declare my sentiments relative to Mr. Lenox, lest I should suffer in your opinion.

I know not whether I am to charge it as a fault to nature, that I have no very susceptible heart; —or, perhaps, I have never yet seen the man who could inspire me with the *belle passion*, which I have so often, with amazement, heard spoken rapturously of.

Mr. Lenox is an amiable man; he has the finest talents, and is endued with the strongest natural good sense, which has been well cultivated by the most liberal education. There are few whose company is more agreeable than his: it is sought after by numbers, but gives no creature more pleasure than your Julia. Yet, I must own, I never suffer any great uneasiness at his being absent a few days longer than I expect; nor am I violently rejoiced if he surprises me by coming sooner than I hoped for. I esteem him greatly; and think I would not make him uneasy for the world. With such sentiments, I dare answer, that we shall be happier than if the most romantic love filled my bosom. If I marry him (which I expect to do), to promote his felicity will be not

only the duty, but chief pleasure of my life. I believe there might appear a little inconsistency in what I have written, yet, I declare to you, I have described, as near as possible, the situation of my heart. I had a prejudice in Mr. Lenox's favour, from his attachment to my brother, which commenced while they were at Oxford, as they have told me. Besides, his character has always been thought so amiable a one, that I saw pleasure sparkle on each countenance around me, at the idea of my consenting to a union with such a man: it diffused a satisfaction over my mind, and prevented my entertaining a desire to act contrary to the wishes of my friends.

Mr. Lenox leaves London to-morrow, for a fortnight: he goes to his father's, whose ill state of health makes Mr. Lenox's absence insupportable to the old Lord.

And now, since I have cleared myself from all imputation of coquetry, (to your satisfaction, I hope,) you must allow me to tell you, that I am very uneasy about you. I can allege nothing in vindication of your partiality for a man who proves himself but ill adapted to the nice sentiments that adorn your breast. Sure, it is a kind of infatuation that chains you to him. When we are unwilling to break with a pleasing object, how many plausible pretences do we find out to excuse a continuation of the attachment! You say nothing to me, my Louisa, in your last, of your intentions; whether (in opposition to the wishes of your friends) they are to marry Mr. Melmoth, or to pursue the more eligible plan of rejecting him.—You must be agitated:—I am well convinced of the arduous task you have to perform;—it calls for resolution, which I know you will exert.

On the commencement of your acquaintance with Mr. Melmoth, he assumed the deportment of a very worthy man; not a sentiment did he suffer to escape his lips, that did not reflect honour on the heart that dictated it: his wit was always tempered with good nature, and never flew at the expense of any one.

There

There was nothing extraordinary in giving a preference to such a creature as he *seemed* to be; but, when he was sensible of *that preference*, how soon was the mask dropped! Instead of the diffident, gentle Melmoth, behold a passionate, jealous, overbearing man, meanly abject where he had any thing to hope, and haughtily despotic to his unhappy dependents.

My amiable friend, can you be distressed for a cause to put an end to this affair, after allowing (which you must do) the character I have drawn to be a just one?

My advice to you is, to tell him candidly, *that, with the morals he possesses, he never can make you happy; neither would it be in your power to study the felicity of one to whose sentiments you have an utter abhorrence.*

Do not suffer a false delicacy to precipitate you into an abyss of lasting misery. My dear Louisa! summon up a proper degree of courage; dismiss Mr. Melmoth, and with him all your cares. --Adieu!

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Sommerville-House.

I CANNOT say that I feel, at this moment, the pleasure with which I am usually inspired when addressing my Julia. With pain do I own myself under the disagreeable necessity of disclosing my sentiments to you on an affair, the knowledge of which will surely wound your sensibility: but, were I to conceal from you what an unfortunate minute discovered to me, I should act very inconsistently with the strict friendship I have ever professed for you. You are, I
hope,

hope, perfectly convinced how much I have your happiness at heart, and that, of course, I think myself under an obligation to acquaint you with the most minute circumstance which threatens an irruption of it.—But, to keep you no longer in suspense, I will relate my unpleasant story.

I went the other evening to pay some visits in the village of——, and intended afterwards to sit an hour with Mrs. Dorrel. Mentioning my intention to do so at Mrs. Topham's, I was informed, that it was her usual practice to go out to a friend of hers, and spend her evenings with her. I had hardly heard this, when I saw Mr. Lenox's chaise stop at an opposite house, and a lady get out of it, followed by Lenox. "Good God!" exclaimed I, "Is this possible! I thought he was at my Lord Lenox's. What can have brought him hither?" One of the ladies gave the most significant smile at my surprise that ever I remember to have seen, and answered, "Your Ladyship knows Lord Lenox is so ill that he cannot entertain his son; and it is natural that he should seek for amusement somewhere: besides, Lenox-Castle is but ten miles from hence."—"And does he take this airing frequently?" "Oh, yes! constantly as the evening comes."—I could bear it no longer, but sent one of my servants to beg the favour of Mr. Lenox to let me say a few words to him. The answer was, *he would wait upon me directly.* I remained in all the torture of expectation a full hour, when I saw him re-enter his carriage, after handing in Mrs. Dorrell. It drove off, and one of his servants brought me his master's compliments, *and that he was sorry sudden indisposition prevented his having the honour of attending me.* He little imagined that I was, at a window, witness to the manœuvre.

One of the ladies, pitying my uneasiness, said, "Lady Louisa, it would be the height of cruelty to keep you longer in suspense. Your friend Lady Julia Herbert is much abused by Mr. Lenox and Mrs. Dorrell. When he is from London, his whole time

time is passed in clandestine meetings with her: neither the cold of these long evenings, his father's illness, or, what is more, the preference given him by that heavenly angel, Lady Julia, can keep him from her. Your own eyes have convinced you of this truth; and it is incumbent on you to make this discovery beneficial to your sweet friend."

Her voice, her manner, pierced my soul. Ah, my Julia! my dear girl! will your philosophy teach you to bear this stroke with patience? Much I fear not!—I desired Mrs Topham to inform Mr. Lenox of what had passed; the consequence of which he might soon guess.

I have not seen him, as a visitor, since his return to the country, though we live, you know, but four miles from Lord Lenox. I had heard some malicious reports concerning him and Mrs. Dorrell, but never suffered myself to regard them in a serious light, as you may imagine: yet, after what I saw last night, I think it time to put you on your guard.

There is no good in repeating my sentiments of Mr. Lenox: he is as much sunk in my opinion now, as he was exalted in it before. As to Mrs. Dorrell, what notions of delicacy can she have, to admit of such behaviour, as must give a licence to ill-natured tongues, from a man who, she has every cause to imagine, is under an engagement to another?

Adieu, my Julia!

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

YOUR account of Lenox's conduct, my amiable friend, both shocks and astonishes me. He certainly cannot

cannot mean to deceive us—No! no!—I will hope that your sensibility, ever awake to the most trifling circumstance which concerns my happiness, causes you to apprehend a danger, on the bare surmises of some whose whole pleasure consists in wounding the peace of others. Be convinced, that a soul like Lenox's can never be attached to one formed in so different a mould as is the lady's whom you suspect to be my rival. The generous, the amiable Edward, is not capable of deviating from the strict path of honour which he has hitherto trod with so much applause. This is my real opinion of him; and, I am persuaded, my Louisa will soon acknowledge to me that she has injured, by her suspicion, an object deserving of every kind thought. But, should his destiny have decreed her to be the "*goddess of his idolatry*," I shall assume all the *stoicism* I can, and endeavour to erase from my remembrance every idea of a person in whose character dwells so much dissimulation, and who will have proved himself, by his behaviour, entirely unworthy of my regard. Yet, till corroborating instances of his guilt appear, I will guard my bosom against every symptom of the peace-destroyer, jealousy; and believe it a paradox, that a man who has so well preserved the appearance of virtue, should, in his heart, be quite a different creature from what he has instructed us to think him.

"Sure," you will say, "there is a change in my Julia! I need give no more lectures on indifference, I find."—And yet, believe me, Louisa, that soul you have so often taxed with coldness, retains its primitive emotions: I am ever ready, though a female, *to enter the lists*, where I think an absent party injured. However, the next time I see Mr. Lenox, (and I expect him in London to-morrow,) I will honestly tell him what I have heard, give him an opportunity for vindication, and, if I then can think him guilty, begin to look a little to myself.

I have

I have some pleasing news to communicate to you. Sir Charles Montague is arrived, and called on us this morning. The air of foreign climes has agreed well with him: he looked handsomer than ever.

"Dear Sir Charles," said Lady Pemberton, "how will your friends be able to express their joy at your long-expected and much-wished-for return! Surely, your intention is, now, to make some residence in your native soil."

"My friends, Madam, do me too much honour. Whatever allurements the French or the Italians may boast of possessing, Lady Pemberton, I hope, knows me sufficiently to be convinced that I would with pleasure resign them all for the happiness of becoming an inhabitant of my own country. I am a true British subject, and so much attached to Albion's coasts, as to prefer being one of her useful members (as it is the duty of every English gentleman to be) to living in a vortex of dissipation and gallantry amongst foreigners, who could not support life without calling both to their assistance."

"Sir Charles, you made a longer stay abroad than you intended."

"I did, my Lady; I was determined, as possibly it might be the last time I should cross the Alps, to be very minute in surveying all that was worth observation in the places I travelled through: besides, I had left many friends in Italy, when I first returned from thence, and was glad to go over again with them some of the joyous hours we had passed together two or three years ago.—But, Lady Julia, how is Sir George Sommerville? I hope there is no impropriety in that question."

"None in the least, Sir Charles: he is in a very bad state of health, and I fear will shortly leave my dear Louisa to lament his loss."

At your name he blushed, and asked *how my charming friend was?*

My

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My heart was depressed, I know not why, which made me paint Sir George's situation to be so melancholy a one. I was surprized at myself the minute after, and told Sir Charles that my apprehension, perhaps, anticipated a danger as yet very far off;---therefore be not uneasy, my Louisa, at my answer: not but that I should be cruel to flatter you with hopes, the disappointment of which would make you feel more keenly your sufferings. I never do: still I think Sir George will live some years. Heaven grant it! And now no more of the painful subject.

Sir Charles staid an hour, and then took leave; but first begged a place in our box to see Mrs. Barry in the Countess of Salisbury.

I have written a long letter;---so farewell!

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Somerville House.

I HAVE but time to send you a few lines, and to tell you that you may now, with propriety, wish your Louisa joy. Inclosed are the means which have effectually dissolved the tie of slavery*. Mr. Melmoth's answer you will find dictated with more submission than either you or I could have expected from so turbulent a disposition.

I have brought myself off pretty well, considering the difficulties my imagination presented to my view. My conduct has, I hope, been such as not to deserve censure. The name of *Filt*, joined to Louisa Sydney, would sound dreadfully in my ears. I

* These Letters do not appear.

have

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have taken your advice, dear Julia, and have acted entirely by your dictates; therefore will rest assured that I must be right.

The reports of Lenox's attention to Mrs. Dorrel become worse and worse. I am glad to hear of Sir Charles Montague's arrival; he will be a valuable acquisition to our society.

My uncle seems better. I know, my Julia, he cannot recover; his temporary reliefs from pain no longer flatter me with hope. I was so well convinced of his danger; that I was not alarmed at your reply to Sir Charles.—I am in a monstrous hurry, and can only say that I am,

Yours,

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To the Same.

Sommerville-House.

I WAS called upon to go out with Sir George to a little village, a few miles off, where he has a very pretty lodge: there we dined, and returned home early to receive some company that we expected to spend the evening at Sommerville-House. I was apprehensive of not finding another leisure moment in the course of the day to write to you; therefore, whilst the horses were putting to, scribbled away those few lines.

I was right in my conjectures; till this hour (past two o'clock) I could not call a minute my own. The whole house is wrapped in sleep: my fears for my Julia will not let me close my eyes.

We are ever slow to credit what will give us pain.—Ah! my sweet friend, for Heaven's sake, do not deceive yourself, but listen to the caution given you by

by her who would sacrifice her life to ensure your happiness! Let me warn you, ere it be too late, to look to a heart that has never yet felt a pang, and of course will not be able to bear the keen anguish of disappointment, unless prepared a little for the blow before it falls. That Mr. Lenox is to marry Mrs. Dorrell is no longer to be doubted; it is the constant subject of conversation amongst her friends: they extol her generosity in making large settlements upon him, as his fortune at present is so moderate a one, compared to hers. Ungrateful man! Ah, good God! will perfidy like his to innocence like my Julia's go unpunished? Surely not.—My dear girl, take the earliest opportunity of banishing from your favour a man who has injured you, you will soon find, beyond his power of recompence.

Lord and Lady Arne called yesterday to see us, in their way to town: she expressed the utmost concern at my emaciated appearance, and insisted on my going with them, at their return, to Southampton, as change of air might be of service to me. Lady Sommerville seconded her and Lord Arne's intreaties; and my uncle urged me to accept of their obliging invitation. I told them I should be happy to attend them; and accordingly we agreed to set off some time next week. They are to pass a couple of days here, after their return from London, previous to our little excursion. I find my health forsaking me every day.

Methinks I hear you call me an insensible mortal, for having so long delayed to mention my pleasure at Sir Charles's kind enquiry for me. Indeed, I am flattered by it, and rejoice to hear he is well. I fear he will be so much engrossed by his London acquaintances, (Lord Budenall, Lord Seymour, Mr. Montague, and his other companions, I mean,) that he will not think of his *country friends*: though he will be often with your brother, of course must sometimes see you, and then he must, naturally, bestow a thought on Louisa.—No words can ex-
press

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press my friendship for him; *friendship only*, my Julia.

Your faithful

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

I YESTERDAY evening received your letters.Yes, it is indeed very true, that Lenox is false. My Louisa knows, I have ever made it a rule to hear every part of a depreciating story before I condemned the person of whom it was told. Judging of others by my own heart (which, I can aver, never did an injury to any-one), I have been willing to suppose that Malice discharged all her venom on an innocent object, through the mouths of a few envious wretches, whose sole pleasure lies in being censorious: but how easy a dupe I have been made, and how cruelly I have been treated, you will soon perceive from the incontestible proofs I am about to give.

Last night, as I told you was our intention, we went to the play. The house was in every other part so remarkably full, that it made an empty box, opposite to ours, conspicuous: a servant was in it to keep places, in a livery which I thought I knew, but I could not recollect to whom it belonged. In the middle of the third act, when the audience was absorbed in contemplation of the performers, I was roused by one of the box-keepers calling out, very audibly, you may imagine, "*Mr. Lenox's servant!*" and immediately he entered, leading in Mrs. Dorrell and another lady.

I was

I was astonished to see him in London, and could scarcely credit my eyes, till confirmed in the truth they told me by Lady Pemberton's asking, *if that was not Mr. Lenox?*

His attention to Mrs. Dorrell, during the whole performance, attracted the observation of numbers; and, whether it was the effect of my mortified fancy, I cannot say, but I thought there were many of my acquaintance who seemed to view me with looks of curiosity, while compassion appeared predominant in the countenances of others. *His senses* were so wholly engrossed by the *one object*, that he could take notice of nothing else.

Lord Pemberton went round to speak to Lady Caroline Denley, who happened to sit near them, and perceived, for the first time, Mr. Lenox.

"Ha! Lenox!" cried my brother, "this is an agreeable surprize! Why did you keep us ignorant of your being in town?" The other started.

"Heavens, my Lord! who could have apprehended your being here!--This is a happiness-----an unexpected-----faith, Pemberton, I rejoice to see you!"

"This is extraordinary enough," exclaimed my brother. "Why pray, Sir, is it so unusual a thing with me to visit the play-house, that you express so much wonder at seeing me in it?"

"No," replied Mr. Lenox, "but I supposed that you had attended Lady Pemberton to Lady F——'s assembly: I heard she was there; is she not, my Lord?"

He was exceedingly confused when my brother gave a negative to his question.

Lord Pemberton was so astonished at his *manner* and embarrassed way of speaking, that he related what passed to my mother and me, at his return to our box.

At the end of the play, Mr. Lenox came to us. Ah, how mean does guilt make a person appear! His eyes were fixed on the ground: he had no longer
that

that unrestrained, elegant air, which impressed people in his favour; he was stiff, and formal, and seemed to suffer greatly. I do assure you I was divested of malice, and felt sincerely for him; I would have willingly saved him further confusion, by forbearing to question him about his unexpected arrival in London; but Sir James Westbrook was determined to torture him. He asked, "To what *extraordinary* lucky circumstance are we indebted for this pleasure, Mr. Lenox? Little less than a miracle could have prevailed on one of your tenderness to leave your excellent father an hour sooner than you at first proposed. Was the lady you have been in company with handsome, I should suspect *a cause*; but she is so cursed ugly, that, instead of attracting a man from his duty, he would adhere the more closely to it, if it could be a means of avoiding such a *master-piece of deformity*. What then are we to thank for it?"

He answered, *that he was impatient to return to us, as Lord Lenox was better; and had called in Portman-Square, but hearing that Lady Pemberton was gone to the play, (observe, Louisa, to my brother it was to Lady F——'s,) he resolved to follow her.*

"Why, as it is so full a house," returned Sir James, with a sneer, "I think you were right in also calling on Mrs. Dorrell---(that's her name, isn't it?)---and getting a seat in *her box*."

The gentlemen laughed much at what Westbrook said, and enjoyed the *poor culprit's* confusion; yet he pretended to join in the laugh, though his countenance plainly demonstrated that it came not from his heart. He asked me, in a low voice, whether I would honour him with half an hour's conversation the next morning? I answered, "With pleasure, Sir." He bowed and returned to his party; but assumed a very different mode of behaviour, scarcely speaking to Mrs. Dorrell, and constantly fixing his eyes on our box.

I must

I must confess my situation was not a very easy one: we seldom know, my Louisa, how dear an object is to us, till we are on the verge of being deprived of it. I could not conceive, before last night, that Lenox had committed such devastation in my heart, as the occurrences that then happened, and which touched me so sensibly, made me conscious of. How little did I profit of the opportunity of seeing so excellent a play so excellently performed! Even Mrs. Barry was not capable of withdrawing your Julia's attention from the magnet that attracted all her thoughts.

I must not, however, be so far taken up with my own anxieties, as to omit telling you, that Sir Charles Montague is, by this time, far on his way towards Sommerville-House. He said, as we were about to leave Covent-Garden, that *he intended setting out at five o'clock this morning, and would be happy to have a welcome reception ensured him, by being the bearer of a letter from me to Lady Louisa.* I told him *there was a great deal of vanity couched under that compliment.* "How so, Lady Julia?" "Why because you want me to repeat what you are well convinced of—that Sir Charles Montague requires no aid to make his company highly acceptable to those he chuses to honour with it; particularly to a family who prides itself on the favour of his friendship, and who thinks every moment an age till it congratulates him on his return to England."

He bowed, and blushed. "Upon my word, *ma belle Julie*, I did not mean to have extorted so flattering a speech from you:—but I must return to my request.—Will you honour me with the charge of a letter to Lady Louisa Sydney?" "Indeed, Sir Charles, I would trouble you with one with pleasure, but that I cannot possibly sit up to write a long epistle to my friend; and no other can I send her." He very gallantly said, *he would wait my hour in the morning*; "and that, let me tell you," added he, "is a favour that you, and *only you*, should

should command; for my impatience to pay my *devoirs* to the dear inhabitants of Sommerville-House, is not to be described."

Mournies is just come to inform me that Mr. Lenox begs leave to attend me in the little drawing-room.—I have dispatched her with my compliments, and to say that I will wait on him immediately.

And now, my Louisa, what is to be the consequence of this meeting? My foreboding heart tells me, an everlasting breach between your Julia and the man whom yesterday morning she looked upon as her destined husband! Ah! may I be able to acquit myself with generosity, with candour, and yet—with firmness! If matters are really circumstanced as I apprehend, I shall have need of a great deal of the latter to support me.—But I will not add to his anxiety, by keeping him longer in suspense. Oh, how has he deceived us!—Down I go.—My dearest Louisa, it will be charity to write soon to your

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Sommerville-House.

IF the present agitation of my mind will permit me, I will give you a description of an agreeable surprise I had this morning; which has occasioned me more spirits than I have had ever since I parted with you.

I was sitting in deep study, the inimitable Pope the subject of my meditations, when Clairon came running into my closet, in her hurrying way, which you and I have so often laughed at her for.

"Mon Dieu! Madame," cried she, "il est entré ce moment, dans la cour du chateau, un jeune homme,

me, de la plus charmante figure du monde: je suis sur qu'il est François; ou du moins qu'il ne fait que d'arriver de France."

Her extreme admiration of this *cavalier*, excited an amazing curiosity in me to see him; but I determined not to make my appearance till I was sent for. Clairon advised me to disregard that *useless piece of ceremony*, and to go down.—I was deaf to her recommendation, and resumed my book:—however, I waited not long for a messenger; a summons from Sir George gave me an opportunity of seeing the *divine unknown*. Judge, Julia, what were my emotions, at entering the room, to behold Sir Charles Montague! I could scarcely speak, my joy was so great.—“Dear Lady Louisa,” said he, “my happiness can be equalled by nothing but my impatience for this long-wished-for moment.—Your indisposition, of which I was informed by your lovely friend, Lady Julia, has occasioned me a good deal of uneasiness—she told me I must expect to find you much altered from it—how pleasingly disappointed am I!”

“I find, Sir Charles, you have not left the art of flattery behind you;—I am rejoiced to see you so well.”

My uncle hoped, *he had now fixed a resolution of residing amongst us.*

“My residence in England, Sir George,” cried he, “depends on *one circumstance.*”

Lady Sommerville, who lets nothing baulk her curiosity, immediately asked *what that was?* He begged *to be excused imparting it to her THEN*, and added, *that she would certainly know it soon.*

“I suppose,” cried Sir George, “your heart has taken a mansion in some foreigner’s breast, and, according as she treats it in your absence, you mean to return, and either fix it firm, or recal it back again. Women, Montague, are hard to trust; and the ocean which divides you proves a general remedy for love.”

“You

"You are much mistaken, Sir George, in your conjectures!—That my heart is stolen from my breast, I must own; but I have been robbed by no foreigner: I left it in my native country, and am come back to claim a restoration of it, or what would make me much happier, endeavour to acquire another in its room—I am willing to make that bargain,—but tremble lest I should be called presumptuous."—

"There is no fear of that, Sir Charles," returned my uncle. "Heaven send you success in your intended undertaking!—Yet I must express much surprise at your constancy amidst the dangers you have been exposed to in your travels, especially amongst the French women, who are *plaguy* fascinating."

The other allowed they are charming, but would not admit them to be equal to the English, whose genuine beauty far surpassed their artificial allurements. He gave us a long account of his tour, in that elegant language, that delightful turn of expression, which ever was so peculiar to him.

Is he not returned, my Julia, if possible, more captivating than he was at the hour he bid us adieu?—I wish Sir George had asked the object's name, who could boast of such a treasure as his heart,—though upon reflection I am glad he did not—I would not for the world have had him seem so curious!—I feel the tenderest friendship for Sir Charles, from finding him still the same—kind, amiable and polite. Was my heart likely to be again ensnared, I do not know where its danger would be so great as with Sir Charles Montague—but Mr. Melmoth has given me a surfeit of love, and, as a fortunate guard towards the security of my peace, this dangerous agreeable has declared his affections to be already engaged. Blessings attend him through every change of condition! The greatest this life can afford will be the portion of the happy woman who calls this most amiable of his sex hers.

Yet does not your Louisa, sensible as she is of the value of such a treasure, wish to possess it.

My intended excursion to Southampton was talked of: Sir Charles told me he would certainly visit it during my stay there. He shortly after took his leave, and retraced part of the road again to arrive at Bagshot, where his uncle, Lord Beaumont, passes nine months out of the twelve. So fond is he of the elegant seat he has there.—My next letter to you will be from Southampton: till then adieu, dear Julia.

L. SYDNEY.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

THE so-much-dreaded conflict is over, my Louisa—How powerful is the force of innocence when confronted by guilt!—Your sympathising heart must beat quick with impatience to know the result of our conference—I will hasten to gratify you.

I attended Mr. Lenox's summons. On my entering, he approached me, and in a respectful manner led me to a sofa—he drew a chair near me, and, seating himself, told me *it was needless to enquire after my health, for that my looks demonstrated that I was perfectly well.*

There appeared so much serenity in his countenance and address, that I could not help repeating to myself, "Who knows but this man may yet be innocent!—if not, he is an adept at dissembling."

"My impatience to see the most charming of women, as I told your Ladyship last night, made me hasten to throw myself at your feet, and pour out the effusions of a heart wholly attached to my Julia, and which has suffered more than words can express, at the

the cruel separation that my father's untimely illness occasioned.—I hoped on my arrival in town to have found you at home, and, on being disappointed, determined to follow you; but, calling at Mrs. Johnson's, I met Mrs. Dorrell, who was just going to the play—she invited me to a seat in her box, which I accepted of, as she had no *beau* to attend her; and it happened well, for yours was too much crowded to have admitted another person."

"I dare say, Sir, we could have contrived to have made room for you, had you been distressed for a place! but I am glad, for your own sake, that you were so much more agreeably accommodated."—He seemed abashed—

"What do you mean, Lady Julia?"

"Why suspect any *particular meaning* in what I said, Mr. Lenox?—Was the answer so extraordinary a one?"

"Your Ladyship spoke as if you had a design to construe an incident, that was the mere effect of chance, into an error intentionally committed."

"If you are not conscious, Sir, of deserving that I should, and know yourself free from meriting censure, you cannot be much alarmed at my suspicions:—besides, what error could there have been, in your attending the lady, supposing it had even been the *result of choice*, instead of the mere *effect of chance*?"

"Pray explain to me what fault I am accused of?"

"I will—it is but right that you should be allowed to justify yourself—or, if that cannot be done, to retrieve my good opinion by dealing generously with me, while it is yet in your power. I shall act with you, Mr. Lenox, as I would wish to be acted by—only let me implore you to answer my candid behaviour by the utmost sincerity on your part."—I took out your first letter, relative to his meeting with Mrs. Dorrell—He changed colour as he received it—I did not wish to

distress him, by the *steady stare* of a *scrutinizing eye*, and withdrew to the window while he perused the letter—I could not help falling into some moral reflections on the instability of human prospects, which, like *fleeting shadows*, elude the eager grasp, when we think we are on the verge of possessing our dearest wishes. I was in a deep reverie, when Mr. Lenox came to me with your letter.

“ My lovely Julia, how your delicate sensibility charms me! He must be a wretch indeed, utterly void of judgment and taste, who could suffer a thought of such a woman as Mrs. Dorrel to enter a heart devoted to perfection like yours!—But he were the worst of villains that would attempt to deceive one, in whom innocence and goodness are so sweetly blended with every accomplishment of person!”

He kissed my hand, and shall I tell you, Louisa, that I then thought, and am now persuaded, it was to hide the confusion which was but too visibly painted in his countenance. How very much did his looks contradict what he averred!—He went on—

“ But why will Lady Louisa take such pains to drive me entirely from a bosom, which, I must be allowed to say, never felt more for me than the cool regard of a friend, and never was backward in crediting any report to my disadvantage?—I reddened at these words, and was going to reply with the proper spirit he deserved;—but, as I knew my own heart, and how apt he would be to catch at every straw, compassion made me willing to allow him this trifling advantage—I suffered him therefore to proceed. “ It, surely, was unkind of her to the last degree! I once flattered myself she was my friend—but now I am convinced that”—— “ Hold, Sir!—Lady Louisa was your greatest friend, till your behaviour caused you to forfeit every title to her regard.——You see, she does not too hastily condemn you, or she would have altered her opinion of you, as soon

soon as the report of your attachment to another had reached her ears, and not waited for ocular proof of your infidelity to the friend of her heart.

——I do not mean, Sir, to make you any reproaches; I am superior to the thought of performing so mean a part—nor would I chuse to enquire into your conduct any further than it concerns myself. This, you will more clearly see, by reading Lady Louisa's last letter, and, I hope, will do me the justice to believe, that no *jealous motive* induces me to act in this manner."

His agitation was visible, in spite of his endeavours to conceal it—He read it—and with a countenance that made me feel for him.—Ah! my Louisa! why will we suffer frailty to efface the good impressions which Nature has engraven on our hearts,—particularly when there is nothing fascinating that compels us to err against our reason! As I viewed the object before me, I was not so much amazed, that a Voltaire's, or a Rousseau's tenets, should gain credence amongst profligates; and instruct them to think, that the human mind is much more prone to evil than to virtue; and that we find within our breasts a vicious impulse, which irresistibly actuates us to swerve from what is right.—Heaven forbid I should believe that assertion?—I hope we are born with greater propensity to good in our inclinations—and am satisfied, if Mr. Lenox had been *even* tempted to deviate from honour, there was reason and rectitude of sentiment sufficient in his bosom (had he pleased to exert them) to prevent his yielding to the vile instigations of his viler *genius*: the commission was voluntary—therefore, in my opinion, never to be forgiven.

When Mr. Lenox came to that part of your letter, where you say that *I shall find the man has injured me beyond the power of recompence*, he turned pale as death—repeated the sentence aloud, and let the paper fall from his hands.

"Lady Julia!"—more he would have said, but his voice for a few moments failed him—at last he exclaimed—

"Ah! Lady Julia!—your friend has probed me to the soul!—Culpable as I acknowledge my late behaviour to have been, it is not, I hope,—altogether irreparable."

"Good Heaven! Mr. Lenox, you cannot conceive it possible"——

"Wretch as I am, Madam, I will not add dissimulation to a crime that now, and only *now*, strikes me as one: believe me, had I been conscious of the fault I committed, I had sooner died than have persisted in it. But, ere I attempt to justify myself, hear me, Lady Julia!—my ingenuity,—my sincerity—will, perhaps, induce you to forgive.—Behold before you a man more criminal than even that letter makes him;—who came this morning with an intention of abusing your gentle, unsuspecting heart, by offering vows contaminated by the tongue that would have uttered them.—It is really true that I have paid an attention of a particular kind to Mrs. Dorrel. Caught by the visible notice she distinguished me with, and willing to let the world see it was in my power to possess her person on any terms, and her fortune, if I pleased, by marriage, I acknowledge I suffered my vanity to misguide me; and, after dangling attendance on her for a-while, grew tired of the scene, and wished to return to that shrine where the most faithful adorations were always offered. I withdrew my visits from Mrs. Dorrell, but found it not so easy a matter to get rid of her: letter after letter did she send me; and I was at last obliged to tell her, that, whilst my heart was so wholly devoted to another, I could not think of further connection with her. I supplicated her pardon for my ungenerous conduct, which I grievously lamented, and offered her any compensation she thought it in my power to make, exclusive of my hand and affections. . . . There is

no describing her fury:—all the virulence of an enraged woman did she pour upon me;—and at last vowed she would make no scruple of exposing herself to you, to render me odious in your sight, *judging (as she said) that a female of such refined delicacy, as she heard you possessed, would instantly discard a man who had committed a flagrant breach of fidelity, whilst engaged to another.* This threat really alarmed me; and, to keep from your ear what I was afraid you would deem a capital transgression, I strove to pacify her; but could not effect it in any other way than by relapsing into the fault I wished to conceal from you. Thus, Madam, have I been made a wretch, through a desire of gratifying the most despicable sort of vanity;—a vanity that draws on me the contempt of those I regard. —No friend would open my eyes, when first I strayed;—no one was kind enough to remonstrate on the dangerous steps I pursued:—all who *professed* an esteem for me stood aloof;—and, as if my destruction was impatiently hoped for, they silently beheld me working my own ruin.—Lady Julia! in this humble attitude let me entreat your pity!—Do not condemn a man, more weak than vile; less guilty than unfortunate!—Guided by your reclaiming hand, I henceforth shall follow that road alone which Virtue points at,—which leads to happiness and you.—Forgive—ah, forgive this first, this only error! Never, never shall I wander more!”

The next post shall convey to you, my dear Louisa, an account of the rest of this (I must call it) interesting conversation. In the mean time believe me,

Yours most faithfully,

JULIA HERBERT.

To the Marquis of OSMOND.

St. James's-Place.

YOU are, I doubt not, dear Osmond, all impatience to have a curiosity gratified, which is usually allowed to be the prerogative of the fair sex, but which we, in general, I think, are equally addicted to.—You expect me to be very circumstantial in my account of every-thing that has happened to me during the few weeks of our separation: I wish my pen may answer to my inclination, and give you the most satisfactory pleasure.

Nothing material occurred till I got to Paris (there I gave your letters as you desired). I immediately went to our good friend the Count de C——, and the next morning made my *obeissance* at Court. You have seen the Queen, Osmond; and, if I remember right, think her handsome. After this *important* affair was over, I was introduced to the rest of the Royal Family a second time, having paid my devoirs to each individual of it when I was last in Paris. I then enlisted amongst our old friends, Roselle, Dobterre, Morbion, and Pelties: we were very joyous; though we often lamented your absence. At the end of a fortnight I thought of departing.

The French women are certainly, in general, not handsome; still they have something that infatuates very much: they are agreeable, and render themselves pleasing by throwing off some of that constraint which our beautiful countrywomen give too much into:—yet, on reflection, they are much less fettered by it now than they were a few years ago—for which many an unfortunate husband curses his fate, and our intercourse with our neighbours in the continent, I am not married, and, consequently, well content.

I embarked from Calais, and landed in four hours at Dover; from whence I proceeded post to London.

don. The spires of that great metropolis, as I approached it, caused emotions in my breast that I had long been a stranger to : I felt a pleasure, as I entered it, which cannot be expressed. " This city," cried I, " probably contains all that my soul holds dear !"—I repaired to Low's Hotel immediately, and was too much fatigued to think of going any-where till the next morning.—I went to Lord Pemberton's as soon as I was dressed the following day. What sensations did not the sight of that house awaken in my soul ! Every pleasing moment I had spent in it with my Louisa and her charming friend occurred to my remembrance, and made my heart dance with rapture ! Oh, Osmond, what fools does this love make of us ! Would one believe that, when I entered London, I had every reason to think that Lady Louisa was married to a Mr. Melmoth, who addressed her when I was last in England ? I had, indeed ;---yet I would never give credit to any suggestions of the sort, which must so infallibly have destroyed my peace. It happened that I was right ; for, to my inexpressible joy, the affair is off, and she will, I hope, yet be mine.---Such inconsistency does the passion subject us to,---to so much misery, sometimes,---I could with justice moralize on all its follies, and caution the friend of my soul against its dangerous allurements, did I not think that the man, who, in character of a *friend*, pretends to *preach* what he is conscious he cannot practise, does but expose himself to ridicule. Sensible as Heaven has formed your heart, it amazes me, Osmond, how you have contrived to keep it so well fortified against the beauteous enemy ; for, though frequent the attacks that have been made on it, you still have resisted, I fancy, every one of them. I did suspect you once---not to Violanté---of having *surrendered* ; but you denied it, and I believed you.-- Now to my own *history*.

I found Lady Pemberton, and her divine daughter, seated in the music-parlour. Heavens ! what
C 5 blooming

blooming beauty appeared in the countenance of the latter, as she arose from her harpsichord to receive me, which she did with the greatest affability and friendship, mixed with that native elegance which constantly attends even the most trifling motion of hers. Compliments having passed on both sides, we spoke of the Sommervilles: the dear Louisa was our next subject. I had the mortification to hear that she was in the country, and had been confined there, since the spring, by a series of ill health. My countenance, through all my dissimulation, must visibly have betrayed the emotions of my heart. I asked with eagerness what had occasioned it? Lady Pemberton told me that her indisposition was chiefly owing to the fatigue and anxiety she must naturally suffer from her constant attendance on Sir George Sommerville, whose whole happiness was centered in his lovely niece. She dropped the subject too soon. I asked Lady Julia if she had seen her friend lately? *No*, she answered, *which was a grievous mortification to her, as she would be exceedingly happy if they were never to be separated.*

I devoured every word she spoke; and thought she never looked more charmingly than when her coral lips opened to pronounce the name of Louisa Sydney. How did she expatiate on the merit of her friend! How express her wishes for her welfare!-- and with a warmth which none but a soul, great as her own, and feelingly alive to every sentiment of friendship, could have experienced.

This amiable girl is, by most people, reckoned much superior, in point of beauty, to Lady Louisa: she certainly claims the advantage of her in person, and may be justly called a *Venus*, while my Louisa is but a little *Hebe*. . . . Lady Julia Herbert, I fancy, Osmond, would boast a speedy conquest over that hitherto *invulnerable* heart of thine: her whole figure is just suited to your taste. I know you to be one of those sharp-sighted fellows who easily discover a mistress's defects; now, to find out the least blemish,

mish, either in the mind or person of this admirable creature, would baffle the penetration of an Argus.

I determined to seize the first opportunity of going down to Sommerville-House; accordingly, the third day after my arrival in town, I got into my chaise, and repaired thither; where I found Lady Louisa, all lovely as I had left her!---nay, if possible, improved; for ill health had occasioned a languour in her beautiful eyes, which gave them an irresistible softness. It requires a more descriptive pen than mine to do justice to the perfections of Lady Louisa Sydney. She received me with a sensibility delightfully flattering;---and yet such only, perhaps, as she would feel at the return of any other esteemed friend, who had been many months absent. Ah, Osmond! if it is but in that light she regards me, alas, my brightest prospects are blasted!

You know your Montague's heart, and have often condemned it for harbouring sentiments of pride, which as yet I have never been able to eradicate: I cannot conquer my resolution never to seem attached whilst there lies a doubt of my meeting with a reciprocal return; yet should I despise, as much as you could do, the woman who would make the first *advances*:---but still, there are moments when a soul replete with sensibility will discover its emotions, without acting by any means inconsistently with that delicacy which should be the first rule of a woman's conduct. A man, when possessed of a pure and ardent passion, before he absolutely declares it to the lady, will, by a particular mode of behaviour, make her in some measure sensible of it. Vanity (a foible which I doubt not but the most perfect female owns in some degree) will not suffer her to be long blind to it. If the object is such as may deserve attention, she will naturally consult her inclinations, and see how they stand affected towards a connection with him. If, upon a thorough examination, she finds them inclined to favour him, she will,
though

though in trifles, shew that partiality which a bosom attached cannot conceal. Take my word for it, Osmond, (so much do I know of the sex,) when once a female doubts whether she can love a man or not, she is lost to all but him who occasions her to ask her heart the question. A sensible woman will let merit be her first view, in the choice of a husband: an object who can boast of possessing that, may, by the means of a constant attention, hope to obtain the affections he wishes for; and, if once he makes an impression, he cannot long be ignorant of his happiness. The very precautions which these delicate creatures take to disguise their sentiments, are generally the circumstances which discover them. I should, therefore, upon recollection, (was I not fearful of flattering myself with ideas that may be too charming, perhaps, ever to be realized,) conclude, from some trifling appearances, that I am not totally regarded by Lady Louisa as a mere friend. Sir George rallied me on the probability of my having left my heart with some black-eye'd, witty foreigner; and, on my soul, Osmond, a blush overspread her cheek. The thought transported me:---I too readily gave into the flattering illusion; and my vanity suggested to me that I was happy. . . I argue with myself against the likelihood of her preferring me to the many superior suitors she has had;---nay, I that have never expressed my passion to her. -how is it possible!---So far my reason says, ---but, alas! there is no reasoning with a heart in love.

I had repeated solicitations to make my stay longer at Sommerville-House.---Indispensable business called me to my uncle's, and I bid adieu to the dear Louisa with a reluctance that I could not conceal. She suffered me to kiss her hand, on my taking leave: it was with difficulty I restrained myself---I snatched it to my heart---pressed it with my lips---my whole soul was in my eyes,---whilst she, with a composure that destroyed my air-built hopes,
smiled

smiled at my earnestness, and wished me a pleasant journey.

Osmond, permit me to repeat, that I adore her? She is the only woman upon earth I will ever marry---at least, it is my present resolution---and I think I shall keep it.

It is time to close my letter, as I must prepare to dress. I am to dine with the Duke of D-----, and every man puts on his most attractive *air*, and studies every *minutia* of dress, to appear well in the eyes of his charming wife;---though, by the bye, we may as well spare our pains, for she bestows little attention on any of us:---her Grace is one of the few who has not benefited enough by the *French modes* to create suspicion in her Lord's breast.

I wonder you are not impatient to return. Surely, your father would not object to it. Come when you will, all England is prepared to behold with admiration "the accomplished, handsome Osmond."---Faith I do not jest! These two appellations are always given you.

The Duke of Westmorland did me the honour of a visit this morning. He asked me many questions concerning you, and said he heard *that you made many women's hearts ach: he supposed that yours endured some part of the pain, but he would be best pleased to know that your sufferings were inflicted by several, and not by any one particular object, lest danger might follow from it.* Upon the whole, he was very entertaining: no man can be more so, when *he pleases.* You'll excuse me.

It is with reluctance, dear Osmond, that I bid you farewell.—I am, much yours,

CHARLES MONTAGUE.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

FATIGUE had overcome me, when I finished my last epistle to my friend. That, and a sad head-ach, determined me to dispatch what I had written, and send what more I had to write by this day's post. Without further preamble I resume my narrative:—may I not call it so, Louisa?

Mr. Lenox had thrown himself on his knees during the latter part of his speech: he waited with seeming anxiety for my answer.—

“You have been certainly culpable, Mr. Lenox—very, very culpable—but you appear to have so proper a notion of your error, that to recapitulate your fault, would be ungenerous of me to the last degree—Besides, you are entitled not only to my forgiveness, but to my sincerest thanks, for having so candidly informed me of what has passed.—I shudder to reflect how miserable a wretch I should have been, had I learnt this when beyond redress! I beg you, Sir, to rise, and once more assure you of my pardon, and wishes for your happiness.”

“Exalted goodness!—Ah, my Julia, I thought it impossible to love you better than I did; but the love I feel for you now is like that we owe to a supernatural being—from henceforwards I can view you in no other light.—*You pardon me!*--Most adored of my soul! how can I thank you!—in what words!—Ah, Julia! this gentle sweetness makes me but the more despise myself! How, how could I ever prove unworthy of such an angel!—I never, surely, can fall again!—Mrs. Dorrell!—oh! what vitiated taste could bear you for an instant?—Where were my senses, Heaven!—Curfed be the moment that led me to her! and doubly curfed the words that melted her to become the willing victim of my folly.—Julia! my much-loved—my dearest Julia! be convinced you never more shall have cause to complain of your Lenox.”—

“As

"As a *friend*, Sir, I never shall; but in a nearer connection, I must not—*will* not—venture to answer for the continuance of your present good purposes."

"What! can you doubt my persevering love?—Could you now view that lovely form—could you know in how sacred a light I hold that spotless soul—your suspicions would instantly be dissipated.—Whilst you are an *angel*, can I, in a union with you, become a *demon*?—Be generous, be kind, my charming Julia!—Do not be merciful by halves; nor, while you say you forgive his fault, refuse your hand to the sincerest penitent that ever breathed a vow of"

"Impossible! Mr. Lenox, cried I, interrupting him. "Do not blame me, Sir, for refusing the *love* you *proffer* :—in justice to you, as well as to myself, I protest, in the most solemn manner, that no consideration whatever shall force me to enter into an engagement with you that must be indissoluble; an engagement that should be entered into with the strictest confidence on both sides. . . . no distrust—no fear, ought to be carried to the altar.—The man who possesses my hand, shall have my whole heart; and that, (I must be ingenuous enough to tell you) cannot be the case, where I have had reason to be wounded in the tenderest part:—my sensibility Sir—oh! how have you made it suffer!—indeed it was cruel."—I could not suppress my tears—my heart was overcharged with anxiety, and would relieve itself that way—one or two unluckily fell on his hand as he held mine.

"Great God! to what a fate am I born! To draw tears from the eyes of the object on earth on whom my soul most doats!"—He dropped on one knee: "Forgive the wretched cause of those heavenly drops that fall from eyes which but to look on was wont to give me life! Never did man adore a woman as I do you—none can love you better—few as well. Ah! had I but been sensible

sible of it at the moment I first cost a pang to that dear bosom, I should have thought my life too small a sacrifice to have expiated the injury!—But no more—I do not mean to distress you, Madam,” seeing me much affected. “In this posture I implore your pity; and, as I cannot give up the hope of calling you mine, beg you to mention some method by which I may regain your confidence—There is no torment I will not patiently endure with that prospect in view.—I cannot, Madam, I will not leave you, ’till you alter the fatal resolution you just now pronounced.”

“After all I have said, Mr. Lenox, can you suppose I shall ever alter it? I feel more for you on this occasion than you perhaps imagine. If you *really* merit my compassion, you possess it all; but sure, you need it not!—it is yet in your power to be happy”——He interrupted me—

“For Heaven’s sake, name the condition;—I will fly with wings of impatience to”---

“You mistake me, Sir,—I cannot deceive you for a moment: my word is *past*, and no earthly consideration, as I said before, shall make me break it. You thought Mrs. Dorrell not unworthy your notice—Her character was fair, till your particular attention gave the censorious a foundation for disagreeable constructions, which it is incumbent on you to remove. Her attachment to you, poor woman! must have been great—Can a man of your feeling support the idea of an amiable person’s becoming the most wretched of mortals on his account?—Ah! Mr. Lenox, summon your reason at this crisis: it will instruct you, that you have a very serious affair in hand, and must conduct it in a way that will atone for a crime in the sight of God, of which it is evident you think too lightly.—It is to *her* you are in truth engaged She knows it well—The malice of the world will be disappointed in finding that you ratify *that* engagement.—Not one reproach shall attend your behaviour, if you will yet pursue the matter—I am the person most
concern-

concerned, and you may depend on my managing what has passed between us in such a way as will redound to your honour."

"Heaven and earth! do you then hold me in so abject a colour?—Can you conceive so meanly of me, as to suppose I would ever think of a union with that despicable woman?—I am under no engagement to her—When she consented to an unlawful intercourse, she was well convinced that at the time my heart was yours entirely. I gloried in it, and made it even to her my boast, that I hoped to call you shortly by my own name.—Let me tell you, Lady Julia, and forgive my plainness—the present case demands it: Mrs. Dorrell thought her virtue no sacrifice, nor did she ever feel one remorseful pang at having yielded it--I used no arts for the purpose--no dissimulation--neither were required--it was a voluntary offering of her own,--and for such a woman—am I to become thus miserable!"

"You must have given her some reason to believe that you loved her--else I cannot imagine any woman could be so abandoned—At best, poor creature! she has been guilty—and is unfortunate.—But your attention at first was sufficient to induce her to think you felt some attachment for her.—Indeed, Mr. Lenox, trifling as your sex makes of such behaviour, it is one of the most barbarous pieces of cruelty you can commit. You insinuate yourselves into our affections by a thousand endearing gallantries, which in practice carry much weight, but in description appear as nothing--without once declaring yourselves lovers, you render us infatuated to you--and perhaps find the unsuspecting heart in an unguarded hour; when you take advantage of its weakness, and then hold it in the contempt you now do Mrs. Dorrell's. You change the object as soon as inclination prompts you to do so---and leave us even without the liberty of complaining.---Unhappy Mrs. Dorrel! I confess you are too justly despised.---I cannot persuade you, Mr. Lenox, to marry her;---but this I know, I will

not

not be any obstacle to your doing it. She certainly judged properly of my sentiments !”

“ May curses keen as the pangs I now feel, blast her !---May she never know hap”-----

“ Hush ! for Heaven’s sake, Sir---Your imprecations on her cannot make me think more favourably of you.---Be satisfied with the friendship I offer, which I dare aver will be permanent, because no diffidence of you will accompany it ; but never flatter yourself with the most distant idea of possessing *more than my friendship.*”

“ You seem so coolly resolute ! Oh, Lady Julia ! allow me but the most distant hope---drive me not into immediate despair !”-----

“ I cannot, Mr. Lenox, allow you the least hope---I have not been taught to deceive ; nor can I prevail on myself to shew you prospects you must never expect to reach.”

Colonel Elliot and Pemberton then came in, opportunely I thought ; and, the first moment that permitted, I slipped up stairs to my dressing-room, and heard Mr. Lenox wish my brother a good day as I was on the stair-case.

Lord Pemberton soon after sent Mournies to beg I would allow him to attend me for a quarter of an hour---You may suppose he did not long wait for admission---When he entered he thus addressed me :

“ I have been anxious, Julia, to know the reason of this puzzling behaviour of Lenox’s, and have waited most part of the morning with impatience to speak to you---Hearing he was with you, I remained in my study, unwilling to intrude, ’till I found it growing late ; and my curiosity was really so much upon the rack, that I could keep myself no longer out of the room. Forgive, then, my disturbing you, dear Julia, since my sincere affection for you occasioned it ; and let me beseech you, by the fraternal friendship I have endeavoured to shew you, to keep me no longer in the dark.—Nay ! my sister-things must be bad indeed when you are in tears !---Can

Lenox

Lenox be a villain? Does he presume to trifle with my sister?---with Julia Herbert!---By Heaven, he durst not!---Speak, I charge you---From whence proceed those tears?---Speak, Julia!---Am I unworthy your confidence?"

"My dear brother! can you be surprized at my tears?---Your attention to my happiness melts my soul with gratitude;---they are the overflowings of a heart replete with the warmest sense of your kindness.---I will not be so much my own enemy as to let escape any opportunity of striving to deserve your regard; and my first step towards meriting it shall be by opening my whole soul to you."

"Indeed, you would wrong me much, were you to conceal from me what may have caused an instant's uneasiness in your bosom. Never had brother more amiable sisters, never were sisters more beloved by a brother.---My life---my fortune---are devoted to their happiness, and neither (did occasion require) should be spared to procure it---Be as good as your word, Julia,---and tell me what occasioned your embarrassment last night?"

"*Embarrassment*, my Lord!"

"No duplicity, Julia,---give me not reason to think less favourably of you now than I have hitherto done."

"You wish to find me culpable, brother, or why so unkindly misconstrue my words? Give me leave to explain my meaning, before you hastily accuse me of a quality I despise.---If I was embarrassed, it was no wonder, when every eye seemed fixed with attention on me, to try whether they could discover the truth of a very silly report that had been propagated concerning Mrs. Dorrell and Mr. Lenox. A person who professes more confidence than I do, would have felt awkward in such a situation---I confess that I did---but flattered myself that my countenance did not betray the emotions of my heart."

"They are actuated I absolutely believe, by the same organs; no face so plainly reveals each thought

thought--Be it your misfortune or your happiness, I know not, but you cannot dissimble without detection---your feelings, exquisite as they are, are instantly delineated on your features-----

Tell me of Lenox---there are odd conjectures circulating respecting him and Mrs. Dorrell--- Sir Charles Montague took me aside last night after the play, to mention some of them that he had heard from Sir John Benyon, which he thought his friendship for me called upon him to repeat, and did it with that gentleman's consent-- Montague told me they neither of them gave much credit to such malicious reports, but judged it hard that I alone should be unacquainted with them. I leave you to guess my surprise---I cannot think Lenox dishonourable---yet I chuse to know from what foundation this censure could arise that is cast upon him, and must insist, Julia, on your informing me of the plan you and Lenox are upon."

"Indeed, my Lord, if there is any thing amiss on either side, I am more in fault than Mr. Lenox, whose behaviour has been so generous to me as to affect me a good deal this morning. You may remember how strenuously you and my mother recommended Mr. Lenox to me: first, as your friend, I regarded him; and afterwards tried to love him, for his own sake. Finding the time draw near that is to lay me under irrevocable ties, my refractory heart forebodes a thousand anxieties:---it tells me that the passion I entertain for him is no more than friendship; and that I shall make neither him nor myself happy in the connection. I wish to break with Mr. Lenox---till I accomplish that point, I can know no peace, and you will ever see the brow of your Julia clouded with sadness. Something has passed between us just now relative to it; and I hope to manage so as to escape uncensured by him and the world, and yet free myself from this unlucky, this horrible engagement!"

"Ah, Julia! I fear it is in consequence of Lenox's perfidy that you have formed this scheme!"

"Have

"Have no such apprehension, brother; and let me intreat that you will not interfere in the matter: my delicacy will suffer much, if you do. Depend upon it, *I will get off very honourably, without assistance.*" I said this with a smile. He looked attentively at me.

"Julia, have a care that you behave ingenuously with me! Think you I can believe ----- however I will rely on you." He looked at his watch, and, surprized to find it so late, hastily retired to dress.

How blessed, my Louisa, do I think myself in my close consanguinity to Pemberton! How excellent a man does he prove himself on every occasion! How eminently conspicuous have his virtues stood forth, even at that early period of life when youth and inexperience would have pleaded for the want of them! But the noble Frederick merited the regard of all, by an exemplary behaviour, and a constant exertion of cheerfulness and affability. No haughty, imperious looks, that added *consequential dignity to pompous words*, bespoke the *mighty Lord*; to all beneath him

----- "As gentle
As Zephyrs blowing below the violet,
Not wagging his sweet head."

When chosen to fill the highest post, what courage, what magnanimity shone forth, and displayed the disinterested, faithful subject, to the admiring eyes of a surrounding multitude! Is it not strange, that, in a kingdom filled with dissensions, as ours unhappily is at present, Lord Pemberton is equally the friend of all parties? A consciousness of the integrity of his honest, amiable heart, makes every one desirous of deserving his good opinion. Were I to attempt describing his private character—to paint him in the different lights of a son, a brother, a friend, a master, how much would my pen fall short of his deserts! — But whither is it running?

Pardon

Pardon, my Louisa, the eulogiums a sister bestows on an amiable brother;—the vein for praising him was upon me, nor could I stop it.

Lord and Lady Percival, Mrs. and Miss Pelham's, Sir James Westbrook, and Sir John Benyon, were assembled in the drawing-room when I went down. Lord Pemberton seemed in excellent spirits, and satisfied with what I had said to him; yet, from a hint that escaped his lips just before he left my closet, I was uneasy. How many bitter reflections occurred to my tortured imagination! "All-powerful Heaven!" would I often say, "should the life of a beloved brother be put to any risk on my account, what would become of me!" Mirth seemed to reign in every breast but mine: situated as I was, no wonder, dear Louisa, that sadness presided in its room.

The company spent the evening in Portman-Square, and I had not an opportunity of relating to my mother the transactions of the day till she retired to her chamber: I attended her thither, and, while she was undressing, begged her to discharge Mrs. Thornton, as I would supply her place. She did so, and listened very attentively to the particulars I gave her. I had the good fortune to meet with her approbation of my conduct; and, on my expressing my fears concerning Lord Pemberton's engaging in any *rencontre* with Mr. Lenox, received more consolation than I could have hoped for: she represented his prudence and *real* courage in so advantageous a light, that I retired to my apartment much composed.

I should have mentioned that I received in the evening a letter from Mr. Lenox, filled with protestations of the sincerest penitence. He describes his misery at the reflection of my *cruel* behaviour in the morning; but cannot, he says, relinquish all hopes of my treating him with more humanity, when he procures Lady and Lord Pemberton to be his advocates. It would have been to no purpose to return any answer to a man who would not accept

cept of my obstinate refusal; I therefore made him none, but left it to his own invention to try what rhetoric would be most prevalent with Lord and Lady Pemberton, determining, in my own breast, not to retract from the resolution I had taken.

As soon as I awoke the next morning, I enquired of Mournies for my brother, and was informed by her *that he had gone out very early*. "What on foot!" "Yes my Lady"—Oh, Louisa, what were then my sensations!—Never, never may I again experience such!—I started up, hurried on my cloaths, and went to my mother's room: I told her my fears,—my misery. Possessed as she ever is of the finest presence of mind, she endeavoured to quiet my perturbed soul; yet I perceived how greatly her bosom was agitated by alarms of the most dreadful sort, in spite of her vigilance to conceal them from me.

After waiting sometime in all the horrors of agonizing suspense, dispatching servants we scarcely knew whither, and wishing, yet, dreading to hear tidings of my brother, his well-known rap occasioned almost as bad an effect, by the sudden transition we experienced from torture to joy, as the former had nearly produced. I am convinced that another half-hour's suffering, equal to what we had endured, would have deprived us of reason, at least. We reproached Lord Pemberton for the shocking condition he had put us into. When we were sufficiently recovered, he informed us that he had written the evening before to Mr. Lenox, purporting that he had something of importance to say to him; and desired he would be at home, and ready to receive him, at eight o'clock the next morning. He accordingly went, and insisted upon Lenox's satisfying him respecting the reports that had reached his ear:—he told him *he hoped he was sensible that his sister was not to be jested with*; and said a great deal to that effect, which I cannot remember so particularly as to write down.

Mr.

Mr. Lenox behaved extremely well on the occasion. He honestly related to my brother all that had passed between us the preceding day, *acknowledged himself culpable in yielding to the advances of Mrs. Dorrell, and that he was amply punished for it in his own reflections.* He complained to Lord Pemberton of my rigour, and swore *no consideration upon earth should make him give me up; he entreated him to represent to me his misery, and urge me to seal his pardon.*

I am sorry to say, Louisa, that my brother treated his fault very lightly, and *declared Mrs. Dorrell was, in his opinion, the criminal, and not Lenox, whom he supposed I would not torture, because her principles were diabolical.*

These men!—these men!—how readily do they throw reproach from themselves on the weaker part of the creation! I do not vindicate Mrs. Dorrell:—indeed, she has acted so vile a part, as to call forth a blush on every virtuous cheek; yet I will maintain that Lenox was quite as guilty—nay more, perhaps. Were his sentiments as good as I once thought them, he would have abhorred a woman of such morals; and, instead of becoming a partner of her crime, have for ever fled an object who cast a reflection on the whole sex.—My brother, I thought, was at liberty to indulge his own notions respecting the distinctions of *propriety*; but Mr. Lenox had been tried and condemned in my heart, from whence I would suffer no appeal.

Lord Pemberton assured his friend he would make up our *brouillerie*, and appointed to spend the evening in Portman-Square.

Lord and Lady Pemberton gave general orders to be refused to every one but Mr. Lenox; who came about eight o'clock. I was in my closet, employed with my pen, when he entered the house. He was shewn into my mother's dressing-room, where my Lord and Lady were. I was summoned to appear.—I endeavoured to collect spirits sufficient

to assist me in the conflict I was about to endure :— it was a hard one, you will allow.—The imploring submissions of a man whom, but a week before, I expected to have called by the dearest epithet in the world, in little more than a month—the entreaties of my brother—and the passive behaviour of Lady Pemberton, who, I knew, would not interfere, but still wished for a reconciliation---all, all required much firmness to withstand : but the alternative was dreadful---To marry a man who had forfeited my good opinion, was a thing not to be done by any means ; and I worked myself up to a pitch of resolution that was unconquerable, when I entered the dressing-room.---As soon as I appeared, Mr. Lenox came up with great eagerness to me, and seized my hand. “ Pardon, Madam, my presumption in attending you, after your cruel silence to my letter. I cannot---cannot suffer you still to refuse my addresses, for a fault so sincerely repented of. Pity and forgive a man whom vanity, it is true, has led astray, but who sees his fault---who owns it ---who condemns and hates it. Let the ardent protestations I yesterday made in writing have some weight :---be not inexorable, my Julia!---still you are *mine*. My Lord has promised to use his influence ; Lady Pemberton, too, deigns to be my advocate : will not such a mother---such a brother---persuade you to receive into favour the most unhappy of men ?”

“ What can I say ? Nothing is more irksome, Mr. Lenox, to a sensible heart, than to give a denial : mine you have subjected to that painful sensation too often within these two days--and to what end !”

Julia,” said Lord Pemberton, “ be generous ; permit me to plead for Mr. Lenox.”

“ Indeed, my Lord, I have a friendship for Mr. Lenox that”——

“ Well, Sir,” exclaimed my brother, “ Julia has gone a good way towards restoring you to your

ancient rights and privileges in her affections; for you know that "*Friendship with woman is sister to love.*" Lenox, I congratulate you; and thank you, my sister.—Now all is forgotten, and Mrs. Dorrel may go to the devil."

Lenox's eyes sparkled with joy:—he threw himself at my feet, and was about to speak; but I interrupted him, and, turning to Lord Pemberton, with as grave an air as I could assume, expressed my astonishment at his conduct, and asked, whether he *could conceive that my resolution was to be shaken?*

"Yes, upon my soul!" he replied. I hope you intend to give a specimen that it is impossible for *so soft, so gentle a bosom* to contain resentment."

"Call me not resentful, I beseech you, for acting in this manner: in justice to Mr. Lenox, as well as to myself, I do it. With you, Sir," turning to Mr. Lenox, "I must be explicit; and once more assure you that I can never be yours. Were we to be connected, a thousand doubts would make me wretched. How often should I think, that the man who could forsake me for *no worthy object*, in the days of courtship, would find it (from the general perverseness of human nature) a much harder point to keep his affections fixed to one he was *shackled* to for life. Your even *firting* with another, shewed an instability of attachment that, in my opinion, paid a poor compliment to the woman you were engaged to. I never should see you look grave, but my heart should suggest to me that I was no longer loved; and I could not but reproach myself with having deserved it, by entering into an union with you, after the proof you gave me of your infidelity, however slight you and my Lord may think it. But, if I am to suppose that vanity was your ruling motive with the lady, why may I not suspect that it might again influence you to extend your conquests? If, under the dominion of that foible, (to give it no harsher a term,) it is certain you could never be contented with the single possession

sion of your wife's heart. You must be convinced, Mr. Lenox, that, with these sentiments, you would be as miserable as myself, were I to give you my hand; and ought to bless Providence, that, knowing each other so well, we are not to be united. I say nothing of the obligations you are under to marry Mrs. Dorrel, since she is capable of wishing it—I speak of my own feelings;—you must act as you please respecting her.—You cannot suspect me of meaning to recriminate. I forgive you, from the bottom of my soul, every moment's uneasiness I have suffered; and only intended to shew you how impossible it is to think of a further connection than what at present subsists between us.”——Louisa, how my heart bled for Lenox!

“Ah, Lady Julia!” cried he, “be not so severe! I would rather die than urge you to do a thing that would render you wretched; but, if your happiness can depend on my behaviour, never, never, my Julia, shall a painful idea disturb your peace.”

Lady Pemberton told me *that I was too refined in my notions*; yet her countenance did not indicate that she *thought* me so. My brother said *I was a female Quixotte, and made a lamentable matter of a frolick that every man was guilty of, who had an opportunity so put in his way.* My mother reproved him for speaking with so much levity. I was vexed, but made him no answer; and, though censured by all, still continued steady in my determination.

I have, no doubt, my amiable friend, sufficiently exhausted your patience: I will not, therefore, give you any longer detail of our conversation, but only say, that Mr. Lenox alleged all that man could do, to induce me to retract my word. He was seconded (but not so strenuously latterly) by Lord Pemberton. At length he took his leave, in a condition that called forth every sentiment of compassion. I have received several letters from him; and, at his earnest sollicitation, have consented to two or three

visits—but in vain! He declares, that, since I am so inflexible, he must tear himself from me, and is resolved to set out for Paris to-morrow, with Mr. Stepney.

Mr. Lenox wished to take leave of me, but my spirits have been so much agitated of late that I could not bear it, and have entreated my brother to dissuade him from urging any further a request so opposite to my inclinations. With difficulty he at last effected it; so I am spared the disagreeable task of hearing the adieus of a man whose unhappiness I cannot see with indifference. . . . May every good angel attend and guard him! and may he find some more deserving woman, who shall cause him to bless the hour that I was obdurate to his supplications! —And now, my Louisa, look back with me, and view, with astonishment, the work of one short fortnight!

“ Oh, 'tis amazement all ! ”

Providence, I hope, has disposed of every-thing for the best. If you but tell me that I have conducted myself properly, I will endeavour, when painful ideas arise, (as I fear they sometimes will,) to find consolation in the rectitude of my own heart, and think, with the charming poet, that

“ Whatever is—is right.”

I am, my dear Louisa, ever yours,

JULIA HERBERT.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Paris.

UNABLE to support Italy after my friend's departure, I wrote to my father, and desired his permission to return to England, begging him at the same time to direct his letters to this place, where

where I shall wait his commands. I should hold myself very unworthy, were I to suffer a suspicion to cross my thoughts of the Duke's keeping me abroad by way of punishment! I am persuaded no such motive can actuate him—Yet I am strangely puzzled for a cause, why for six years I have been made an alien to my country and my friends, as if I was an out-cast from them; and a disgrace to the man to whom I owe my birth?—What tho' I am supplied with more money than I can spend!—what tho' my equipage, my attendants, my garb, are more suited to a prince *of the blood* than your Henry!—they give me no pleasure; and I would rather be a plain cornet in one of the regiments in England, than the Marquis of Osmond, with the superb appendages which belong to that title, in Italy or France. Montague, if my father was sensible of the misery a refusal to my request would inflict on me—his heart could not avoid feeling some pangs—at least I think so.—Oh, my friend! how little do you know the anxiety that is planted in my breast!—Most severely have I suffered for my imprudence in going opposite to the commands of the Duke, by accompanying you on a tour that has blighted all my hopes of happiness! You must understand from what I have said, that my attending you to Paris, after my father's writing to forbid it, was the unfortunate period from whence I date my wretchedness.——

You express astonishment at my preserving my heart free from the softest attachments.—Ah! Montague! have I done so?—Alas, no!——I see you start, but blame not my want of confidence in you—My adventure bore the semblance of romance—you admit not of the possibility of love at first sight—at least a lasting one;—and I was never in a humour to bear your raillery or contradiction, which I could not evade, from my total ignorance of the name and residence of the object. Both are yet unknown to me, but at this distance you will be more

indulgent to what you may term my folly, and may spare your ridicule; therefore my soul shall be laid open to you. You hint, in the letter before me, your remembrance of the change that appeared in my spirits during the latter part of our stay in this metropolis—you were uneasy at it, and wished to hasten our return to Italy.—How often have I reproached myself for treating you ungenerously! *when, in the most supplicating accents, you have besought me to repose my inquietude in a bosom that I should ever find true to its trust.* Could you conceive the conflicts that tore my soul in pieces, you would forgive a silence that was painful to me beyond description.——I have been on the brink of a discovery—my lips have often involuntarily opened at your call to reveal the secret, when a timidity injurious to friendship has again sealed them, and forced it back to canker on my heart.——Say not that this is some puerile affair, which absence or time will administer a sure remedy for—consider, it is near three years since we were together at Paris, and I am as much devoted now to my beauteous incognita as at the first instant I saw her.——

It is true, no one was gayer than your Osmond, or a more general admirer of beauty. I sacrificed at its shrine, and was distinguished for gallantry, amongst the most gallant—yet my heart always came off conqueror——Ah how changed! even the lovely Violanté had lost all her charms with me on my return, and I yielded up, without a murmur, the title of her cecisbeo to the Count de Alsforza.—Now, my dear Charles, I will give you the particulars of this matter, from the strangeness and perplexity of which you may form some judgment of my embarrassed situation.

The evening prior to our departure from Milan, you may recollect, we passed at the Marquis de Fellechini's palace: at parting, his amiable Lady put into my hand a letter, which she begged I would deliver

deliver myself—adding it would introduce me to the acquaintance of a lady of distinction, whose company I should find agreeable, and to whom she had the honour of being related. It was addressed, “A Madame la Princesse De * * * * *, Superieure de la convent de * * * * *, à Paris.” I bowed, and assured the charming Marchioness of my utmost diligence in presenting the packet she did me the honour of committing to my charge.

On my arrival in Paris, my first attention was to execute my promise. No composition of Cicero’s ever produced greater effects, tho’ in different ways, than the amiable Felichini’s letter did—I consider it as the epoch of my fate; for it introduced me to a place which contained an object that was created, I fear, to embitter my days. I need not tell you, who have a slight acquaintance with the Princess, how much I found her surpassing her friend’s description in point of sense, vivacity, &c. but will hasten to my narrative.

One morning in my way to the Duc de * * * * *
* * *, I called upon the Superieure to give her *le bon jour*. As I entered the saloon, I saw standing by her, with a letter in her hand, the most beautiful girl I ever had a conception of—Her figure was tall and elegantly formed—I must try to describe her:—Her hair was of a dark auburn, unsullied by powder. She had large black eyes that sparkled radiant through the ambient fluid, and conveyed, with one glance, more expression to the soul than the eloquent tongues of a M*****ld or a B**ke could do in a day: never did I meet with any half so beautifully piercing, yet tempered with a softness so exquisite, that they claimed your gentlest feelings the moment they beheld you: they were fringed with long, glossy eye-lashes. Her mouth—heavens, how lovely!—the idea of a rose-bud, half disclosed, and not entirely freed from the dew of the morning, occurred to me, from the freshness of it: methinks I see

it opening to give a passage to the words she addressed to the Princess; but, when she smiled,

“A darting glory seem’d to blaze abroad,
That my desiring eyes were never weary,
But hung upon the object.”

Her coral lips enclosed a set of the most even and the whitest teeth that ever were placed in the head of a mortal; they surpassed infinitely Violanté’s. Her nose was an exact Grecian. The lower part of her face was turned with the most perfect symmetry. Her skin was of a dazzling whiteness. Ten thousand blue veins meandered about her forehead, (which, I should have mentioned, was not inferior to the other features I have described in beauty), her temples, and her chin. Add to this the most animated, the most blooming complexion that ever adorned a Hebe, and you may form a poor, imperfect notion of the countenance of this sweet girl. Her neck resembled a swan’s in length and whiteness: the fall from it to her shoulders was beyond the art of an Apelles to imitate—In short, so was the whole figure: and so inadequate am I to the representation, that I leave you to finish, in your imagination, her matchless form. I have brought her back to my own recollection most warmly, and you will pardon my rapture in exclaiming, with the poet, she was, surely,

“Fram’d in the very pride and boast of Nature,
So perfect that the gods who form’d her, wonder’d at
Their own skill, and cried, A lucky hit has mended
Our design! Their envy hinder’d, else
She had been immortal, and a pattern when Heaven
Would work for ostentation sake, to copy
Out again.”

The angelic creature seemed scarcely more than fifteen, but there was nothing childish in her appearance. So charming at that tender age—what, oh! Montague, what must she be now!

She

She would have withdrawn on my entrance, but the Princess detained her hand. "No, my dear, finish the letter, and then deliver your sentiments to me upon it. That gentleman is an intimate friend of mine, and will be so obliging as to excuse us for a few minutes, when he knows that the letter is of importance, and requires immediate perusal."

The sweet maid looked at me with a blush, and, curtsying, resumed the paper. I begged I might not be an interruption, and said I had only made use of her highness's permission to ask her how she did, and, finding her well, would take my leave.

"By no means," she answered; "my fair charge will soon have done, and then I shall attend you. I have been a whole week without receiving your *devoirs*, and cannot think of losing the present opportunity to chide you for your neglect, in so sadly fulfilling the Marchioness's injunctions. I therefore entreat you to stay."

I withdrew to a window, that they might pursue their conversation without restraint; and there had time to contemplate an angel's form, which has been ever since riveted on my imagination.

When they had settled the business that ingrossed their attention, the lovely girl advanced towards me with a dignity that animated every feature, and, in the most polite, gentle manner, *begged I would pardon her for occupying Madame's attention, when it might have been so much more pleasingly taken up by me*: then, elegantly curtsying, quitted the room, and left me absorbed in wonder and delight.

"The syrens taught her voice their melody!"

The harmonious music of hers operated as sensibly on my ears, as her divine person, and the irresistible graces which adorned it, had done on my eyes. I knew not whether what I had seen was a vision, created by a delirious fancy, or reality, till awakened from my stupor by the Princess's enquiring *if I*

ailed any thing? I tried to rally my scattered spirits; but it must have been visible that I was struck to the heart, from Madame's evading the many questions I asked relative to this beautiful girl. All I could learn from her was, *that she was an English lady, put under her particular care.*

"Does she mean to take the veil?" cried I.

"That is uncertain," replied the Princess.—

"Her name, Madam! for God's sake, inform me of it! There can be no harm, surely, in gratifying so trifling a request! Let me implore you, Madam!"

"Your eagerness, Sir, forbids it. That sweet girl is dearer to me than words can express. I will acquit myself as I ought concerning the precious trust, and give no hold for disquiet to any party. I have the highest opinion of Mr. Cholmondeley, (the name, you must remember, that I assumed on quitting Italy, to avoid my father's detection,) and permit me to add, regard for him; and, were I to gratify my inclinations, they would lead me to comply with your solicitations: but to do so would be improper, and on your honour, your gratitude, I depend, for making no further enquiry about her."

Her words were explicit, and her air still more determined. I withdrew, abashed, confounded, cursing my own folly, that would not suffer me to dissemble the emotions of my too eager heart. Had I appeared indifferent, I might now have been blessed; for, could I but have discovered her name, "*bolts and bars,*" nay, death should have been encountered, rather than not have sought an opportunity of telling her what devastation she had, in a few minutes, committed on a heart determined to be hers alone. Ah, Montague, could I have done so, I should have been in a less unhappy situation, at the worst, than I now am; for, if she rejected my passion, a certainty of my miserable fate would have been preferable to this torturing state of suspense and apprehension.

In

In vain did I employ Souville's diligence to tamper with the servants (for the first time in my life I acted meanly); they were not to be corrupted.—How often have I repeated my visits to the Supérieure, in hopes of catching a lucky moment when her too vigilant care might have been lulled to sleep! but to no purpose. The only intelligence I received from her was an assurance of her friendship, as long as I continued to deserve it; but, at the same time, it was made known to me, that to drop my visits would be considered as a favour conferred on her Highness. I forebore, with sad reluctance, to torment her; but night after night have spent in solitary walks under the convent walls. I found it impossible to gain any thing by my nocturnal excursions. So well regulated was this monastery, that I was driven to despair, and felt the less reluctance to go back with you to Rome. In ten months after, I returned to Paris, but was equally unfortunate in my search during the few weeks that I remained here.

Again have I been assiduous to trace the lady. I have the additional mortification to know that my amiable, though obstinate friend, the Supérieure, is dead. I have seen some of the nuns, but can get no information from them. The religious of this house seem to think, from my enquiries, that I intend much harm; and those who *can* tell me something of my fair one, fancy they have merit in keeping her concealed.—Montague, what is to be done? What hardships would I not encounter to have the satisfaction of once more beholding her!--of telling her how exquisitely dear she is to me!—If she is returned to England, I have every thing to fear; for it is next to impossible that beauty like hers should remain unconnected amidst thousands of adorers:—and yet, I think, if she was still here, I must have discovered her in some of the various stratagems I have used for that purpose since my arrival.

Thus,

Thus, my friend, I have at length acquainted you with the reason of the change that has been so visible in me since that fatal excursion of ours. Never shall I appear otherwise, if this charming unknown is not restored to my sight. I shall go to England with a fixed resolution of searching each corner of it, and discover her, or die in the attempt. To complete the measure of my misfortunes, I know my father meditates a match between Lady Henrietta Marchmont and your Osmond: it has been his point of view from my earliest infancy. But let him not propose it to me, if he expects my obedience on all occasions. In every other respect, I will try to please him:--in this point he as soon may expect to behold generosity in an usurer, as compliance in Osmond.

You must mention no more any lady to me, as a *future*.—I am ashamed to say it, but will acknowledge my perverseness---I am already prejudiced against Lady Julia Herbert, because a connection between us, is supposed *here*, will take place when I go over. Colonel West told me yesterday, *he would venture to lay any wager it would be so; for he thought we were formed for each other*. What an arrogant, prophetic way of speaking! And let me tell you, Montague, your thinking “she might boast a speedy conquest over my heart,” shews but little penetration on your side. No more of it, therefore, prithee! I knew her brother at Bologna; ---an amiable young man,----reckoned *dangerously* handsome and agreeable amongst the ladies, but distinguished by our sex for being remarkably sensible and clever. Lord Pemberton was not liked in the Count de Palimo’s party, (to which I was introduced,) because he was much in the Marquis Belarini’s, who was their enemy, from some family quarrel, that was handed down from the second or third generation to the present one.

Can you forgive my remaining so long silent on such a subject as the fair Louisa? Your description of her is charming. There is no doubt of your
being

being well received; and should it be your lot to marry her, may she prove deserving of my Montague, and you must be happy!

If I had not already spun out this letter to an immoderate length, I would ask a few questions of "Who's in? Who's out?" and what you are all doing to occasion such commotions, as even to make *Frenchmen* all attention, and wait with impatience for the *ne plus ultra* of your transactions? I might, with some reason, begin to think myself an exile to my country; yet I find neither distance nor absence has wrought any change in my patriotic feelings; and I am as much interested in the fate of England, as the most zealous of her subjects can be.

Charles has intreated me to permit him to go over to see his mother, whom he has been separated from ever since I left England. A good servant deserves every gratification: I shall give him this packet, with directions to deliver it to you himself. I will not entertain a thought of going back to Italy, and have therefore desired him to return, and wait at Dover for my arrival, as I shall leave this place in two days after I get the Duke's letter.

Adieu, dear Montague! ---- Believe me, with sincerity,

Your most faithful and devoted

OSMOND.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

THAT my behaviour should be approved of by you makes me happy*—Now let the busy world look on, and either acquit or condemn your Julia--- I am prepared to meet its smiles---or frowns. If my sensible, amiable friend, applauds my conduct, I am

* This Letter does not appear.

satisfied;

satisfied; and shall behold with intrepidity the affected whisper and steady stare, ever ready to meet an object who has unluckily afforded conversation for the public And has the transaction of Portman-Square already reached Southampton? Your letter that tells me of your arrival there, informs me that it has.---Ah! my Louisa, it is impossible to divest a delicate mind of a certain punctilio given surely for its torment.---Excellent Colonel Worthley! I revere him for his just admiration of my friend! — Endeavour to dissipate your thoughts, dear Louisa: suffer nothing but tranquillity to approach your bosom, and your health will, I doubt not, soon be established.

You have probably heard that my sister arrived three nights ago, perfectly well, and handsomer than ever. In her way from Dover, she passed a week with her great friend Lady Sophia Nevill, whose whole happiness appears as much wrapped up in Almeria's affection as Almeria's is in hers. I need not describe our joy at meeting; your feelings will better paint it than my pen.

Last night we really had an elegant entertainment; our company, tho' select, very numerous.

Almeria and I had such a variety of partners, that it would be impossible almost to remember them all. I only recollect that she began with Lord W——a, and concluded with the smart Col. Elliot. I danced the two first dances with the Duke of D——, and the two last with the *fine* S——r.

I think Col. Elliot begins to admire Almeria with more partiality than mere friendship inspires— It is early, you will say, to pronounce him a lover, —yet, in my opinion, he proves that a person may be *caught* at the first or second interview——at least his behaviour to her is like that of a man in love. We did not break up till five this morning.

I may

I may own to you that my sister received the adulation she deserves: her elegant figure shone conspicuous in a minuet she danced after supper with Lord C——e. Two such forms, and such adepts in that graceful movement, could not fail of attracting the attention of every beholder.—Every one seemed happy; if they were not, their countenances dissembled well.

In the course of the evening, Captain Walpole (Lenox's intimate friend) approached me—

"Lady Julia" cried he, "permit me to remind you of the poor wanderer, who is now perhaps surmounting difficulties with a heart but ill adapted to meet additional uneasiness—Will you not bestow one compassionate thought on Lenox?—Such a letter as I have received from him would melt a breast of adamant."

"Indeed, Sir, your friend is often in my thoughts. If he is unhappy, he possesses all my compassion: but time, distance, and a variety of objects, will soon eradicate every impression that could be hurtful to him. On that supposition I console myself; for, believe me, when I assure you, that the idea of making any one unhappy, would darken my brightest prospects." *He told me that such a sentiment was peculiar to the goodness of my heart; that, although Lenox confessed himself wretched, he applauded the generosity and candour of my behaviour, and believed it to be in the power of Heaven alone to reward a soul in which firmness seemed blended with the tenderest humanity.*

I curtsied, and would gladly have withdrawn from him; but he put his friend's letter into my hand, and endeavoured to make me promise to read it—I begged to be excused, and returned it with a peremptory look—He received it bowing, and exclaimed,

"Oh

“ Oh those eyes!

They will be understood, and conquer
In their cause :—he must not be a man
That can resist them.”

I was fortunately asked by Mr. H——n to dance a cotillon before I could reply.

But, was it not extremely wrong, my dear Louisa, to remind me of Mr. Lenox? Determined as I am, there is no good in presenting him to my imagination.—And why read his letter? Perhaps, it is supposed I am one, who wishes to act a theatric part, and who, after raising my own admiration at the heroism of my performance, will finish the scene by rewarding Lenox's *mock* repentance.—I am angry to my heart with Captain Walpole—Did I *really* think there was duplicity in his intention, I should quickly withdraw every favourable thought from him and his friend too—but I will hope that compassion, and nothing more, stimulated him to lose sight of his accustomed delicacy—and in that case he ought, surely, to be forgiven for the goodness of his motive. I am interrupted

* * * * *

——I was summoned, my Louisa, to attend Lady Pemberton, who put into my hand a letter she had received from Lord Seymour, supplicating her influence with me to receive his addresses. He endeavours to dazzle us with large settlements---his amiable character is a far greater incentive---and, had I a thought of entering into a connection at present, Lord Seymour would likely be the man of my choice. ---But I have at this time an invincible aversion to the idea of marrying, which, should it continue, will indubitably subject me to the appellation so universally dreaded by our sex. --But I am yet very young, Louisa, and, after the escape I so lately met with, think it most prudent not to get into any engagement

gagement in a hurry. I told Lady Pemberton the impossibility of my listening to Lord Seymour's suit. She, with her usual goodness, assented to my importunity, that he should be dismissed as a lover, and joined me in wishing to retain him as a friend——

Her Ladyship is at this moment employed in writing to him to this purpose. Why would he not receive a refusal from me the other night?---Thus to subject himself to this second mortification!---I have no patience with him!---and, to say the truth, my Louisa,---I am just now out of conceit with all mankind. --

Do not imagine that any disappointment I have had occasions this present chagrin-- Do not believe either that Mr. Lenox still holds my heart, and makes me fretful——Oh no!--what I have done in respect to him has been upon deliberation, and was the result of my own free will---Were it to go over again, I would act in the same manner---Heaven take him into its protection! Shower upon him thy choicest blessings, O thou Omnipotent Being!——And now, my Louisa, friend of my soul! let him never more be the subject of thy pen—and here I resolve never again to name him, either in my letters or my conversation.—Were I to conclude so seriously, nothing would convince you that I was not affected with melancholy,—yet for once you would be much mistaken. Sir Charles Montague told me last night that he intends setting out tomorrow for Lord Beaumont's at Bagshot, where he proposes to spend two days: from thence he goes on a hunting party to Broadlands, and then proceeds to Southampton. It is easy to guess what magnet attracts Sir Charles so often into Hampshire—he absolutely makes himself ridiculous about you—a perfect Oroondates in love, I vow!——Would you believe that no intreaties could induce him to dance? He sat down *soberly* to quadrille with two antiquated Dowagers and a married Lady; and, after passing an hour in that *amusing* manner, pinned himself

himself to my sleeve for the remainder of the night (except when I danced), and withstood with admirable fortitude the innumerable darts that were levelled at him from Miss Walpole's bright eyes.

—And yet, Louisa, it is strange, he never once mentioned your name, nor even laid hold of an opportunity that was in his way of speaking of you; for, in his hearing, Colonel Cecil asked me whether you had found any benefit from changing the air?

—Now, do not be alarmed, and suppose that he was *offering incense* at my *shrine*. No, believe me, he was very satirical on many of the company, —very general at other times in his subjects, —very complaisant —and very —stupid. He was a dead weight on my hands; out of spirits, because you were absent, I suppose — Indeed I could have sympathized with him for the same reason. He has promised to spend this evening in Portman-Square, and I shall then give him a hundred messages to you. Another fine opening, Louisa: if the man is not a simpleton he will surely seize it, and bestow a few encomiums where they are so deservedly due, knowing, too, how soon they will travel to Southampton. His reserve to me, in what relates to you, displeases me: however, I will not act as the generality of his acquaintance do, who are eternally mentioning your name before him, in hopes of extorting a word, or blush, that may gratify their despicable curiosity. — I will always act as delicately for my friend as I would for myself. I can tell you the world has already paired you, which shews it has judgment, in matching so meritorious an object as Louisa Sydney with one very little inferior to her. By the length of this letter, you will scarcely conceive that I feel at this instant harrassed and fatigued almost to death, and yet the fact is so; — but indeed I know nothing that can so soon alleviate any suffering I endure, as writing to, or conversing with you. Adieu, my

Louisa!

Louisa! Believe me happy when I can convince you
how much I am

Your affectionate

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Southampton.

I WAS obliged to quit my friend rather abruptly in my last, to attend Colonel Worthley, who, with his usual kindness, had called to pay his morning devoirs to us. I had scarcely answered his polite enquiries after my health, before we heard a carriage stop, and a very loud rapping at the door bespoke the approach of some other visitor. You may imagine how agreeably surprised I was to hear Sir Charles Montague announced—He entered the drawing-room with that peculiar grace which you know accompanies every movement of his. I think I never saw him look so well as he did that morning. He has, with their fashions, acquired enough of the French *maniere* to render him elegant and agreeable, without running into the extremes of ridiculous foppery, which make many of our nobility return from Paris true emblems of the monkey who went abroad to see the world. He seems to have adhered strictly to the plan which he set out with; a resolution of travelling merely to acquire a perfect knowledge of the world, and to embellish his mind. He always possessed that native politeness which scarce Paris could improve;—nor has he thought it necessary to divest himself of that genuine nobleness of sentiment which is the characteristic of a true Englishman.

Sir Charles complimented me on the recovery of my looks.—How dangerous, Julia, is flattery from his lips! Tho' well convinced his expressions of praise to me are nothing more,---still they please, and occasion my heart to palpitate with joy.—His voice

--his

--his eyes--second his words, and make the whole object but too captivating.

"Sir Charles" cried Lady Arne, "our seeing you in the country so soon after your arrival, is an unexpected pleasure: it was natural to fear that London would have monopolized you at this time."

"Why Southampton," cried I, "in this dreary season, must wear a dull aspect to one just arrived from *Gallia's metropolis*, where nothing reigns but gaiety and mirth"—

He begged my pardon, and could almost, he said, find in his heart to reproach me, for supposing him possessed of so little taste, as not to prefer the place where I was, to every other. This was repeated in no serious manner, so as to carry the appearance of attachment with it—but in a strain of gallantry. He added, "I told your Ladyship that I should undoubtedly be led to take this road, soon after you had fixed your residence here—I was not without a hope of being able to attend Lady and Lord Arne and your Ladyship hither; but Col. Hinchinbrook claimed an engagement I was under to accompany him, his sister, and aunt, on a little tour.—You know Miss Hinchinbrook, Lady Louisa: she is just returned from Paris, where I saw her often—A fine girl I think!" I answered in the affirmative.—Col. Worthley (who, it seems, was acquainted with Sir Charles at Modena) asked, "May we hope for the pleasure of your company in this country for any time, Sir Charles? I fear not, as I suppose you came down on a party of pleasure."—The other answered, "My stay will be uncertain—the happiness of meeting you will be a strong inducement to me to prolong it.—I have been on a *flying visit* to Ormsby—paid a shorter one at Broadlands, and, to be as good as my word, came on to Southampton, accompanied by Budenall, Mr. Dacre, and Frederic Montague, who speak of returning to town in two days, and are importunate with me to go with them."

"Why, if I am not a little out in my calculation, Sir Charles," cried Lord Arne; "I believe you will
will

will find this place rather dull, if you trust to its amusements, and mean to spend any time here, which I am selfish enough to hope you will—but I know enough of your prudence to be convinced that you foresaw this, and have guarded properly against it, by selecting in your imagination some beautiful object, who will, from the dearth of entertainments *here*, be at leisure to listen to such *soft tales*, as must flow from your lips—Eh! Lady Louisa! what do you think?—Now, it has been always my opinion, that *old love* cannot be *totally forgotten*—therefore I guess the person.—However, be that as it may, we are not the less sensible of the honour you do us.”

Was not Lord Arne very unkind, Julia? He will never debar himself of a moment's gratification by sparing his jest. His amiable wife, ever delicate, ever considerate of another's feelings, asked Sir Charles, “Whether Miss Hinchinbrook intended visiting Southampton?” and smiled as she spoke. He returned a negative to her question, and Lord Arne was just about to convince us, he did not mean her, when his Lady prevented him, by giving a quick turn to the conversation.

It was silly of me to feel embarrassed. Had I been ignorant of the female Lord Arne alluded to, I should not have been the least affected—but, you know, he was always laughing at me about Sir Charles before he went abroad, and firmly believes we have *still* a partiality to each other.—How ridiculous of him to entertain such a notion, seeing so little cause for it!

I had now an opportunity of asking Sir Charles concerning my sweet friend.—He gave me a description of your ball, which he said was superb.—I cannot pretend to express his encomiums on my Julia.—Upon my word, had Miss Hinchinbrook heard the profusion of praises he bestowed on you—she must have possessed more heroism than our sex generally do on these occasions, to have kept the *green-eyed monster*,

monster, at that moment, in proper subjection. He admires Almeria much, but could not help acknowledging that the *divine Julia* (to use his own term) *reigned triumphant Queen* that night.

Sir Charles had passed near an hour with us, when a servant entered, and presented me with a letter. I looked at the superscription, and joy visibly overspread my countenance at beholding your writing. Lady Arne *congratulated me on a pleasure which, tho' so repeatedly received, seemed each time to bring an added value with it.* Sir Charles entreated me to use no ceremony—but to read my packet—for my features too evidently betrayed that much I wished to do so—and exclaimed,

“How happy must the object be, who occasions such pleasing sensations in your breast!”

“I assure you, Sir,” replied I, “it is one who is entitled to every tender sentiment it contains.”

He certainly must have known that that object was my Julia Herbert; he could not have supposed it another: and I was so prepossessed with this opinion, that I never thought of mentioning your name till he was gone; and I then recollected it would have been better to have confirmed his surmise that the letter came from you.

Sir Charles goes this evening to a ball given by Lord Fitzosborne, at which I am engaged to dance with Col. Worthley. Sir Charles did not ask me—I wonder at it—Perhaps he imagines my being an invalid will prevent my joining in the set—and probably means to keep me in countenance by not dancing himself—and, at the same time, my vanity tells me, he hopes to have a *tête-à-tête* now and then, when the young part of the company are engaged in this gay diversion, and the old at cards—or perhaps he knows that my hand is to be Col. Worthley's for the night!—Yet how so?—In short, I will not perplex myself, but wait the result.—How arrogant these conjectures are, Julia!—Indeed, you must allow them to be so—and I cannot vindicate them.

I was

WHAT YOU WILL. 71

I was not sorry when Sir Charles and Col. Worthley departed, that I might peruse your letter.

And here let me congratulate you on the sweet Almeria's arrival.—Much do I long to embrace her—amiable girl! What an age does the time appear to me since I had last that happiness!

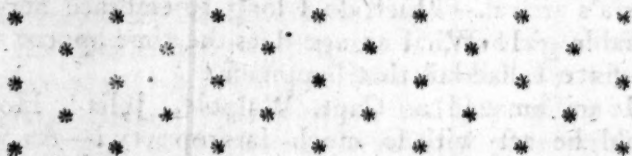
I am amazed at Capt. Walpole, Julia! How could he act with so much impropriety?—As for Lord Seymour, I do think he behaved indelicately in applying to Lady Pemberton, after *your* giving him a positive refusal—How can a man be happy in the possession of a hand that he owes to compulsion, and not the voluntary choice of the heart? It is an ænigma to me—Luckily Lady Pemberton is one that will neither compel, nor persuade, you to a match you dislike—but my Lord Seymour proved, in his application to her, that he did not think as worthily of her as she deserved.—Yet he has refined notions on most occasions!—It is certain, this ridiculous love makes fools even of sensible men! My Lord is certainly amiable, tho' not formed to be connected with you.—We are all apt to soar high in our expectations, and vanity is as predominant over reason in one sex, as in the other.—I dare answer, when he addressed you, he had not a doubt of succeeding.

“None without hope e'er lov'd the brightest fair,
But love will hope where reason would despair.”

Sir Charles told me of the agreeable Col. Elliot's particular attention to Almeria. If I judge right, that connection will never be approved of by Lady Pemberton and your brother. Let her look well to her heart, lest it become a fugitive—so elegant a person as Elliot's, so sensible, and withal so worthy as he is—he will raise such powerful advocates in his favour, as must require much philosophy on her part to withstand—and yet the match would be so unequal, it should not be thought of.

I must

I must leave you : the hour for dressing is come.
 ----To morrow you shall receive a full account of
 this evening's entertainment.



Wednesday Morning.

I am now seated to perform my promise, tho' the fatigue, which is the consequence of dancing, renders the task rather arduous.

After spending the requisite time at my toilet, and ornamenting my person with unusual care, I entered the drawing room.—Col. Worthley and some gentlemen were waiting to escort us—We got into our carriages, and proceeded to Lord Fitzosborne's.—I was hardly seated in the ball-room, before I was taken out to dance a minuet.—That ceremony performed, and I returned to my place, I perceived Sir Charles Montague enter the room—Heavens ! what were my emotions ! I think I never saw a more captivating figure in my life—He was dressed most superbly—Every person's attention seemed fixed on him the instant he appeared—He saluted each lady that he knew as he walked up the room, but looked with an inquisitive eye amongst them for some particular object.—My vanity, ever too presumptuous, told me *that object* was Louisa Sidney—Alas ! my Julia, it was no other than Miss Stephenson. She soon caught his eye, and he was rivetted to her side 'till we stood up to dance. He then stepped to me, and, holding one end of my fan, cried,

“ Lady Louisa, it is almost dangerous to look at you !—you even outvie, if it be possible, your former self.”—“ in ugliness, Sir Charles, you mean, no doubt !”—“ Heavens ! what a thought !” and he quitted me to claim his partner, as every gentleman

man was taking his place in the row.—I need not say that Miss Stephenson danced with him—She really looked very pretty.

I refused to go down the third country-dance, pleading as an excuse my ill-health, and unfortunately placed myself near Lady Mary Athill, who, by her trifling conversation, endeavoured to draw my attention from much more pleasing objects. Her dress, however, could not escape my notice, the singularity of which attracted every-one's gaze. She wore a yellow satin Italian night-gown, trimmed with silver gauze; purple ribbands laced with silver. Her hair dressed in curls, or rather dishevelled, which seemed to be intentionally done. Three large feathers, a purple, a yellow, and a white one, nodded over the superstructure that was enormous on her head. One straggling lock of hair hung down the left side of her neck, which was meant to appear careless, and be the harbourage of hundred Cupids—but unluckily it had received too much pomatum for that purpose; for it looked as if it had been plaistered down: this favourite lock (such I suppose it to be) was by no means indebted to nature for the most trifling twist.—Figure to yourself, Julia, the person of Lady Mary Athill thus attired!—yet, believe me, tho' many opportunities offered for indulging a vein of raillery, I did not once amuse myself at the expense of this antiquated maiden. Had I given her the least encouragement, she would have entertained me with an account of the genealogy, age, and *demerits*, of every individual in the room.

Lord Arne came up to her, and addressed her in the following words:

“ Lady Mary, I am ashamed of having been so long in the room without paying my devoirs to the most charming woman in it—I have wished to kiss your hand, but could not obtain one moment in which I should not have been thought an *intruder*. How naturally do the bees flock where the sweets

E

are!

are! Your Ladyship has been so surrounded, as if each gentleman was anxious to convince the world that he was by no means deficient in point of taste."

"Oh dear, my Lord," returned Lady Mary, "you are a great flatterer: We should really be absorbed in vanity, were we to pay too much attention to what you say."

"Pardon me, my Lady—few of your sex afford that field for our admiration to work upon, which you may justly boast of."

"Oh dear, my Lord!—be silent, I entreat you, on this subject. Consider how fatal a one it is to expatiate too long upon—we are so apt to be led away by such pleasing discourse!—and was your Lordship a single man with so much *judgment*, I absolutely would not listen to you."

"My judgment, my Lady, never discovers itself but in its distinction of the most perfect of women—More cruelly charming this night than ever!—Upon my word, Lady Mary, you have an immense deal to answer for! What mischief has not this beautiful lock (pointing to the little straggler) done!—What temptation is here for the fatal *sheers*! I have been so petitioned to do a desperate act, that I would advise you to remove it, or the consequences cannot be told."

"Heaven forbid, my Lord! That would be unpardonable indeed! Nothing could recompence the loss—Tho' trifling it might appear, I should be tempted to exclaim with Belinda,

"For ever curs'd be that detested day,
Which stole my step, my favourite curl away!"

"How trivial to you would be the loss, compared to the acquisition of him who gained it!"

Can I describe to you, my Julia, the distress I was in to keep my countenance during this conversation? Impossible!—Tho' it was carried on in a low voice on both sides, Lord Arne contrived to let me, and the Lady who sat on Lady Mary's
right

right hand (Mrs. Nelson), overhear it. I could bear it no longer; and was glad to accept of Col. Worthley's offer, to make up a cotillon set. I accordingly left Lord Arne to pursue his amusement with Lady Mary, who deserves no compassion, as she brings this ridicule upon herself by her intolerable vanity and levity; foibles ill suited to a person turned some years of sixty.

Until last night, Julia, I believed myself disinterested about Sir Charles any further than a friend should be—The distress I felt at seeing him single out Miss Stephenson convinced me in a moment that I loved him—Yes, Julia,—I repeat it—I love him, and am destined to be attached to one who has no heart to give me. Miss Stephenson possesses Montague's:—and yet, Julia, could you have believed that *mere* friendship actuated Sir Charles's behaviour to me?—He has been unkind, I think, to shew so much partiality in his manner

——But I will not complain,—neither must I remain where he is—My return to Somerville-House shall be speedy—I reasoned with myself a length of time, and *tried* to fancy that my esteem—*friendly esteem*—was hurt at his not paying me the accustomed attention; but that notion soon vanished, when I suffered pain on his bestowing encomiums on Miss Stephenson.—I was not *little* enough to envy her for her personal perfections—that you will easily believe—yet I could not yield to her a predilection in his favour without horror—I wished every one else to admire her. I confess I should have received pleasure at hearing Sir Charles find some defect in her.——But such meanness was my bosom fraught with, that I sought for opportunities of extolling Miss Stephenson to him, as if afraid of being suspected of the truth—I was deservedly punished for this abjectness of soul, by the praises he lavished on her——My dear Julia! how I despise myself! Add not your contempt to my own humiliating reflections!——In

vain I search my own heart, and lament that our minds should be so differently formed.—I am not able to discover in my breast one of those noble, generous sentiments, with which your bosom is so replete.—They say confession of a fault, is commencing the road to amendment; I wish to experience this truth. At present, chagrin and mortification exert their dominion very powerfully over me—

* * * * *

How insulting, Julia, was it of Sir Charles, when out of Miss Stephenfon's hearing, to apologize to me *for not having asked the favour of my hand!*—I forget what reason he gave for not doing it.—Sure, he did not perceive I was disappointed! I thought I had concealed my feelings extremely well—but, upon his speaking thus to me, my delicacy took the alarm—I told him *he honoured me much by his INTENTION; which I could not have profited of, as my promise to dance with Colonel Worthley had been of a very long standing.*—His excusing himself to me was very odd! I had no right certainly to expect a preference to Miss Stephenfon, or to any other lady; and an apology where it is not required, I rather think a reflection upon the understanding of those to whom we make it, by supposing them pleased with what we are conscious is not their due.

Colonel Worthley seldom quitted me. They told me his behaviour was conspicuous. He accused me of being out of spirits; I imputed it to an ill-natured head-ach. Sir Charles, in an interval between the dances, seated himself by me, and rallied me on the Colonel's attention——I fancy he is no favourite of his; for he did not speak of him in the warm terms of recommendation that every one else does; yet said nothing to his disadvantage. I do not believe he could,—In answer, I expatiated on the amiable

amiable character Col. Worthley bore, and extolled him as he deserved. He turned to me with a penetrating look, and, sighing, said,

"I wish you thought as well of a particular friend of mine!" He paused—and then asked, "Pray, Lady Louisa, did you know Lord Osmond, either before he left England, or in France?"

"No, Sir, I never had that pleasure—I dare say, if he is your friend, his acquaintance must be a valuable circumstance—yet my good opinion, I have not the vanity to think, can do him any service."

"He is not the friend I meant, my Lady—tho' I wish him as well as I do—*myself*—and presume to claim his friendship in the very highest degree.—The picture you drew of Col. Worthley bore too great a similitude to Osmond to escape my notice—as to sentiments of honour observe;—for Osmond's person is the most perfect that ever Nature finished, and called a man. His heart and sense are equal to his form. It is rather uncommon to hear one man founding the praises of his friend in an enthusiastic manner—I beg pardon—but it is a subject I often indulge myself on, and feel as much pleasure from it, as you would do from hearing encomiums passed on Lady Julia Herbert.—Col. Worthley, I fancy, would be in a dangerous way, was Osmond here. What a couple would ye make!—*He did me too much honour*, I said, *in naming me with such an object*. But at that moment I felt an inexpressible indignation, at his *appearing*, tho' indirectly, to wish us united; and why, Julia, should I have done so?—I am sure I cannot tell—he intended, no doubt, to pay me a compliment.—As he was about to reply, Miss Stephenson passed us.

"Is not that a prodigious fine woman, Lady Louisa?"

"She is indeed, Sir, and reckoned sensible and amiable."

"Your Ladyship is acquainted with her---pray is she addressed by any particular gentleman?"

"I believe not,---she is universally admired---and I think whoever calls her his, will stand a chance of being much envied."

"Why, upon my word, *I do not think* he will stand in need of any pity.---I must not, though, be deficient in my respect to her. My long absence will bring a tax on my politeness; and I must, though with the utmost reluctance, steal from a pleasure that is dangerous." As he ended, he flew to join his fair partner, and left me to exert what philosophy I could on the occasion. He soon returned, and begged me to discard the indisposition which preyed so apparently on my spirits---Many females took uncommon pains to convince him that I was remarkably grave during the night. I thought the anxiety he expressed for me rather exulting. Conscious of my own ridiculous situation, I imagined he divined it of course, and meant to act ungenerously. Were it so ---is he any longer worthy of a pang? Surely not ---Why will not my reason gain a victory over this rebel heart! I am convinced that Sir Charles intends to recommend me to Lord Osmond---He said that he expected him over very soon---and, I dare say, will be zealous to unite *two friends* that he *boasts* of esteeming so much.---I will now conclude this painful topic---I am ashamed of having been engrossed so long by it.

I shall give you comfort, I am sure, my Julia, by informing you that I find a daily amendment in my health---*That* once more established, I will flatter myself, that my spirits must gain strength, and teach me (with the help of your excellent counsel) to subdue this invading passion.---Since I have written to you, I find my mind more tranquil.---Adieu, my dear Julia, let not your affection suffer any diminution towards

Your

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman Square.

EACH day brings with it additional regret, my Louisa, that we cannot now go down to Pemberton Castle. Fond as I am of that delightful mansion, its present chief charm with me is its being so near the spot that at this time holds my amiable friend. Unfavourable as the season is for travelling, could I follow my inclinations, I would soon be in Hampshire ; for

“ Tho’ the fields have lost their lovely die ;
No chearful azure decks the Sky ;
Yet still I’d bless the louring day :
———Louisa’s there, and all is gay.”

My mother would certainly not refuse me, were I to ask her permission to go down to you ; but then ——I know she would be uneasy at my absence, and even in your arms, Louisa, I could have no pleasure, whilst her bosom was corroded by an anxious thought.

I am astonished at Sir Charles Montague’s method of proceeding—He certainly imagines, as Mr. Melmoth (the principle obstacle in his way) is removed, that he may keep your *hopes* and *fears* alive, by flirting at one time with a lovely young woman like Miss Stephenson, and at another (fearing your heart would break) withdrawing his attention totally from her, and wholly offering it to you—then, lest you should be raised to too great a height of happiness and grow presumptuous, he deserts you, to distinguish some other object, and returns again when inclination or vanity prompts him to do so. How little do we value our own felicity, when we vest the *Lords of the Creation* with power to destroy it !—It is evident, that the most perfect of them should be

kept ignorant, till the marriage-day, of the passion they inspire, when, for example, even a Montague makes an ungenerous use of the knowledge he has derived from so prying a penetration. That he has discovered the preference you give him, is beyond a doubt. The men, Louisa, charge us with vanity to a monstrous degree—let them but search their own breasts, and if they do not find that it reigns more powerfully with them, I am much mistaken. Never do one of the sex fail of putting the most flattering interpretation on an insignificant look, or word, which generally *in itself* means nothing; and they most commonly construe a severe sentence, dictated by the heart, quite the reverse to what was intended. The most deformed, the most awkward, and, most of all, the most silly, are assuredly under the despotism of vanity: What then must the handsome, the elegant, the clever? influenced, we find, by motives of self-adoration, pardonable in a weak sex, that calls for every allowance, but which cannot be vindicated by any excuse whatever in *exalted* souls, that receive every aid from much superior educations than are thought proper to be given, to females.

Why, my best Louisa, accuse yourself so unmercifully? Be comforted, my fair friend, and rest assured that I admire your ingenuous behaviour more than I can describe—Your feelings were all natural—Few in so embarrassed a situation could have acted so well.—I am really shocked at Sir Charles's cruel conduct—If you do not blame him—I will. *I am privileged* to do it from being an eye-witness, before he left England, of his very particular attention to you—He must expect no generosity from me equal to that he meets with from Louisa Sydney.—Your letters—his manner—and report, convince me, that he pursued his usual mode towards you until the night of the ball. What can he mean by his warm mention of Lord Osmond to you? If he really intends

tends this behaviour as a trial, it will lessen him, I must acknowledge, in my opinion. To give pain to a heart that is visibly attached, merely for the pleasure of rendering its partiality more conspicuous, shews an ill-natured way of thinking.---I will not suffer my pen to express any further resentment till I hear more---It will be a difficult matter to make me give up my good opinion of Sir Charles; but it will be the infallible consequence of his persisting in so inconsistent a conduct.

Methinks I am impatient for the arrival of this *much-talked-of* Lord Osmond: his character is always ushered with praises, that flow spontaneously from the mouths of those who have seen and been acquainted with him. He was spoke of with enthusiasm at the drawing-room yesterday. Lord S*****t called him a *Phœnix*—*there was not his fellow to be found in a century*, he said.---Upon my word, I think you had better take Sir Charles's hint, Louisa, and reserve your heart for this *incomparable* creature. I have heard it is an observation of Lady Mary Athill's, (whose fame has gone abroad,) "that there is more pleasure in vexing than in rewarding a lover." Suppose you were to try!—I am glad to find that Southampton has not proved as dull as I at first thought it would at this season, though I will say in its favour, that I believe no town is happier in a collection of inhabitants. I saw in the papers, that the officers quartered there have very politely instituted a subscription assembly during Lady Arne's and your residence among them. Your account of Lady Mary has given me much laughter. Lord Arne is very wicked—pray tell him that I say so; and believe me,

Much yours,

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Southampton.

AH, my Julia, how are my feelings awakened! ---How is my delicacy wounded by your confirmation of my fears! You think, then, Sir Charles has *really* discovered my weakness for him!--How poor a mortal did that minute make me in his eyes!--Alas! I have acquired none of that dissimulation which is the usual prerogative of our sex. For the first time in my life I know the want of it;---and heartily wish myself a share of what, I till now, thanked Heaven for having formed me without a spark of. How shall I look at him when next we meet! how suppress the disagreeable sensations that will naturally arise from reflection!---I blush at my folly---and must only endeavour, by a strict guard on my behaviour in future, to convince him that his vanity led him to form very erroneous conjectures.---My pride is hurt; it will be my assistant, and save my delicacy from being further alarmed.---This ridiculous attachment cannot long continue---Sir Charles will prevent it by his manner of acting:---soon are a few virtues weighed down, when put into the scale with arrogance and self-conceit!--Unkind Montague! I think you have not reaped much advantage from your second tour to Italy.---The ladies of that country have filled your head with chimerical notions of vanity, by the adulation they paid you. Even sense like yours could not withstand their admiration---it has fallen a victim to their praises.

Since my last letter to you, Sir Charles has shewn great attention to us. He called yesterday with Miss Stephenson and her aunt. They had heard I was indisposed with a head-ach, and agreed to come and sit an hour with me (the very reason why they should have kept away.) I assured them I was sensible of the favour they did me, and my
behaviour

behaviour by no means contradicted that assertion. Sir Charles appeared in great spirits; Miss Stephen-son in no less gay a humour. The *bon-mots* passed very rapidly to and from each other—I was rather at a loss to determine which of the two possessed most cleverness. Miss Stephen-son, I believe, thought *she* was entitled to the *palm*; I, after much difficulty, decided (in my own mind) that Sir Charles was victor. I have no doubt, though, but that my partiality was stronger on the occasion than my judgment.

Before they left us, Col. Worthley came in, and, according to custom, seated himself near me. I took notice that Miss Stephen-son looked a good deal confused at the distinction he paid me—A blush overspread her face—and, notwithstanding Sir Charles was at her elbow, endeavouring to make himself agreeable to her by a thousand little *douceurs*, she had sight and hearing for no one but Worthley; and, for the first time since I became acquainted with her, I had reason to think there was foundation for a report that prevails here of her being attached to him.—I saw a conflict in her heart that excited my tenderest compassion—It was evident that Col. Worthley's behaviour to me caused her no small emotion.—I tried as much as possible to seem inattentive to what he said; and, with the utmost fervour, wished to have directed his assiduity another way. I loved the girl at the instant I thought her soul labouring under those *tumults* which mine cannot contend with—I could almost have reproached myself for being instrumental to her suffering—yet I was innocently so.—Every unkind thought of her, which arose in my breast the night of the ball, was quickly withdrawn, and severely did I condemn it for ever having harboured them. Sir Charles took an opportunity of asking me *Whether Col. Worthley had ever paid his addresses to Miss Stephen-son?* I told him I really did not know.

“ There

"There seems, *entre nous*, Lady Louisa", cried he "a *penchant* on her side towards Worthley."

"Not in the least, Sir Charles.—I rather suspect Col. Worthley's heart to be the one attached.—Did he think as you do of her partiality for him, I believe he would soon put it to the test, by making the earliest offer of his hand to her."

He caught hold of my fingers unawares to me, and suddenly pressed them with a rapturous air to his lips.

"Generous Louisa! how unlike the generality of your sex! Col. Worthley does indeed wear the bondage of love—but Miss Stephenson inflicts it not."

I drew my hand hastily away, and with a look of displeasure (for it spoke not the language of my heart) replied,

"Sir, I am surprized at this liberty,—it is one that no gentleman is entitled to take with me."

"Forgive me, Madam; I meant not to offend.—My admiration transported me to use a freedom of which I cannot repent—but say, do *you really think* that Worthley is attached to Miss Stephenson?"

"I make no doubt but a man of his judgment must admire merit and beauty in any object;—and, surely, they are eminently blended in Miss Stephenson."

"Amiable sweetness! How seldom do we find one female express herself so delicately of another!"

"I am never flattered, Sir Charles, by receiving a compliment at the expense of my sex."—He would have replied, but I would not hear him, and, turning to Col. Worthley, called another subject.—I perceived that I had displeased Sir Charles—He coloured, and looked vexed—His eyes sparkled too with anger, I remember. He was no doubt disappointed—He imagined I was acquainted with the situation of Miss Stephenson's affections, and expected by his flattery to draw from me whether they were really engaged; if so, that he might give over
the

the pursuit, and not suffer the mortification of a refusal. I am malicious enough to hope he may address her.—Rejected he will be; for I don't suppose she can give her hand to one man, whilst another is in possession of her heart. And I think so slight a punishment he is entitled to, from his art in wishing me to betray a confidence, supposing it *were* reposed in me. Heaven knows how much Sir Charles is mistaken in the intimacy he concludes subsists between Miss Stephenson and your Louisa—My acquaintance with her is very slight.

Col. Worthley asked Sir Charles where Lord Osmond was?

"In Paris, Sir," replied Montague, "he was, when I last heard from him. It is difficult to say exactly where he is now; I expect him momentarily in England." "I am glad of it," returned the other. "Every creature who has the happiness of knowing him, must be solicitous to see him." Sir Charles bowed to this speech of the Colonel's.—Lord! Julia, they must be very intimate indeed, when they receive compliments to each other, as if paid directly to themselves! I suppose Lord Osmond would *sink his head upon his breast* for any *civil thing* you said to him of Sir Charles.—Lord Arne came into the room, while Col. Worthley was speaking, and desired to know *who he was so solicitous to see?* Sir Charles answered,

"We were speaking, my Lord, of an intimate friend of mine, Lord Osmond—I dare say your Lordship has heard of him."

"Yes, I have, Sir, and a most exalted character he bears." "Just what he merits," replied Worthley.—"And do you expect him shortly, Montague?" said Lord Arne.

"I know not my Lord," returned the other, "whether he may not be in London at this moment."

"The Duke of Westmoreland," cried Lord Arne, "intends him as a husband for Lady Henrietta Marchmont!"

"God

"God knows, my Lord! I think there need be no hurry to provide for him."——

"Why, he is an only child, and the sooner he is married the better. It would be a terrible thing to have no heir for that noble fortune and title; and, if he chance to die unmarried, it will be the case. How old is Osmond, Sir Charles?"

"Four-and-twenty, I think, my Lord, I heard his father say a few weeks ago."

He waved all further conversation, I plainly perceived, relative to Lord Osmond with Lord Arne; but, turning to me, said, "Lady Louisa, I hope to have some merit in your eyes from my choice of a friend: he does honour to that appellation.——I have a presentiment, that a very uncommon circumstance will be unravelled, when he is introduced to one of our most beautiful and accomplished *toasts*." He looked significantly at me.

"Your words are mysterious, Sir Charles!" "Are they, my Lady?—Well, do me the honour to remember them, and you will find them in a little while fully explained—if not, Osmond shall tell you their meaning." The latter part of this answer was spoke in a laughing way. The ladies proposed to retire, as the hour for the toilet drew near. Miss Stephenson *looked* a wish that Col. Worthley would attend her (as they walked, the day being fine); but he either did not, or *would* not understand it—the former I hope: they left us, attended by Sir Charles only. Col. Worthley made his exit, in a quarter of an hour afterwards, and I directly came up to dress, for which purpose I must throw down my pen. I did intend to have deferred writing till evening; but, when I entered my closet, the writing implements lay so temptingly, that I sat down, and have scribbled—an hour I declare.

* * * * *

What

What you read in the papers, is true—the officers here have very obligingly set on foot the subscription-assemblies you mentioned.—Apropos—speaking of news-papers reminds me of the following paragraph I saw in one yesterday: “We may assure our readers, from undoubted authority,” that a treaty of marriage is now in agitation between the Right Hon. Lord Seymour and Lady Julia Herbert, second sister to the Earl of Pemberton.”

I am called away——

* * * * *

The amiable Mr. Norton was in the drawing-room, and I was summoned to attend him when I just now quitted you.—The pleasure I felt at seeing him was quickly destroyed, by his informing me, *that he intended leaving England immediately.* “But I could not depart,” said he, “without once more embracing my dear Louisa, and receiving her commands to Lord Clermont—to whom I suppose you have many messages to send.” Mr. Norton brought me a letter from Sir George Sommerville, who will not hear of my returning home till my health is quite restored. I shall seize the opportunity of my good friend’s going to Bologna to write by him to my brother, and inform him that I have entirely discarded Mr. Melmoth.—I have often owned to you that Lord Clermont was never fond of the connection, though he was but too cautious in telling his sentiments, as he believed me more attached to him than I really was.

Mr. Norton *supposed, that, when he returned from abroad, which would be in a year, he should find Louisa Sidney metamorphosed into Lady Louisa Montague.*

I asked, *what reason he had for such a conjecture?* “A more substantial one,” replied he, “than mere report.” My curiosity was excited—Not to have expressed a wish to be acquainted with what he alluded to, would have appeared unnatural, and have carried

carried too great an air of affectation to a man who knew every movement of my soul. *He spoke enigmatically*, I told him, *and wished he would unfold his meaning*. He answered, "I will, Louisa. You are conscious I have always behaved ingenuously with you. The confidence your artless, unsuspecting heart ever reposed in me, deserved to meet on my side the utmost sincerity. I professed to you the affection of a brother—In that I deviated from candour—a much stronger attachment filled my breast than the one which we give the fraternal name to—I loved you to distraction, and was obliged to smother my passion. You, unfortunately for my peace,—honoured me with your confidence at the commencement of the late affair between you and Mr. Melmoth.—I heard frequently from your own lips, that you gave him a preference to every man. My hopes were at once blasted—nay more! the ungrateful business of assisting his love was imposed on me at a time that I wished to plead for myself.—He begged my friendship, which I could not in honour refuse, as I then thought him deserving of you.—Having no prospect myself of gaining your affection, why should I, I reflected, be so ungenerous as to hinder his succeeding?—It is true, he will, by marrying Louisa, deprive me of what I value more than life: but then—he will make her happy,—and I shall be contented in that idea. Thus I reasoned—and resolved to conceal the love I had for you—Ah! what conflicts did I endure, when I perceived your determination was fixed on marrying Melmoth, and that his dissipated life was become the subject of every tongue! And is this dear girl, cried I, to be thus sacrificed!—Forbid it, friendship.—I flew to Mr. Melmoth, and made one in his nocturnal revels, hoping to shew him, by degrees, the vicious plan he was pursuing. I remonstrated—He answered with a laugh, and pushed the bottle about with more eagerness. Inebriated with

with pernicious liquor, no wonder that he hesitated not at the commission of other crimes!—He was deaf to reason.—I could not long bear to be a partaker of his riots, when it answered no effect; neither could I, circumstanced as I was, from a punctilio of delicacy, recommend to you to break with this unfortunate man.—Your guardian-angel interfered and saved you from the precipice on which you stood.—You are reserved for happiness, Louisa,—for Sir Charles Montague. As your friend, he asked me, just before he left London, *Whether you still retained any affection for Mr. Melmoth?* I told him, *if you did, there would have been no absolute necessity for your discarding him: your doing so was a voluntary act.* He further asked, *If I thought he stood any chance of being accepted, provided he was to presume to address you?* I replied, *It was a question I could not by any means pretend to answer; but that it was my opinion, few men could so soon succeed in gaining the affections of any Lady as himself.*—Did I speak properly to Sir Charles, Louisa?—Why are you affected?—You do not blame me, surely, for loving you, no more than I can you for thinking of him more favourably!—He is far better entitled to you than I am—though he cannot regard you in a greater degree.—You were certainly inclined to like him, (though partly engaged to Melmoth, when he was last in England; and I easily perceived, that, if you were at liberty to elect a lover---in short, if Melmoth had not been encouraged, Sir Charles would have been the man. ---Consider me no further, dear Louisa, than as a friend warmly attached to your interest.”

Ah, Julia! how was my heart affected during this long speech of Mr. Norton's! I could only express my feelings by my tears---He took my hand—“Why this emotion my Louisa?”

“Ah, Sir,” cried I, “how does the idea of having been, though unknowingly, the cause of pain to such a heart as yours, distress me!—Where must merit look for its recompence, if you are wretched!”

wretched!—And does it depend on me to make you otherwise, and shall I refuse it?—No, no; it must not, cannot be!—If my hand and fortune, with my unwearied assiduity to please, can give you happiness—can be considered by the best of men as an adequate return for such matchless goodness—they shall be yours!—You shall not longer remain without my heart—Allow it but a little time—just to shake off its present weakness—I will not deceive you—you have guessed the situation of it—and then, I dare answer, it will for ever after be devoted to you alone. It is from such a soul as yours that I can expect felicity.—Receive the offer I do not blush to make you, dear Sir!—you best deserve it.”

“No, my Louisa,” replied he, “I will not suffer the generosity which has hitherto guided me to forsake me now.—To take advantage of the compassion I have excited in your gentle bosom, would make me despicable to myself.—Great as the temptation is,—I will withstand it.—Be happy, dear Louisa!—give me your friendship, and let this conversation be buried in oblivion.” He burst into tears, and left the room abruptly—but returned in a few minutes, quite composed.

“I have many apologies,” said he, “to make to Louisa for acting this unmanly part.—I must go to Italy; with all my heroism, I cannot stay and see you married. When that event is over, I will return, and be contented with my fate.—You must write to me frequently, and tell me all that concerns you.”

I assured Mr. Norton, *that he was certainly wrong in imagining that Sir Charles intended to make proposals to me.* To convince him that he was, I related to him how he had behaved to me since he came to Southampton. “Depend upon it,” he answered, “he only meant to try your affection—I acknowledge it is an unkind method of acting with women of sensibility, and too commonly practised.—Our feelings are not so refined as yours; we are more selfish,

selfish, and consider not the impropriety.—Montague's notions are in some respects (besides) particular.—Perhaps he wanted to find whether you had not a leaning towards Worthley, whose assiduity I have heard of; and thought his expedient a good one."

Mr. Norton then joined Lord and Lady Arne, to give me time to compose my agitated mind.—I soon went to them, and did not again quit my excellent friend, till the disagreeable summons was given for his departure, by his being informed *that his servants were ready*. Our parting was attended with many tears on both sides.—After I saw his chaise drive off, what were my emotions! You can best judge of them, who have so feeling a heart.—I cannot expatiate on Mr. Norton's merit—there could be no bounds to the subject—and it is time to send this enormous packet away.

In spite of all that Mr. Norton said, I am positive Sir Charles has not a thought of your Louisa—He might have had, till he saw Miss Stephenson—but she stepped across me, and has robbed me of my captive. I begin to feel very easy about it.—

How blessed should I be to see my Julia! Too flattering idea! You must not be encouraged. On this topic I did not dare trust my pen till I had almost got to the end of my paper, lest my unavailing wishes for a circumstance so very unlikely to take place, should have thrown me into the horrors.—For worlds I would not have you do any thing that could give Lady Pemberton a moment's uneasiness.—Adieu, dear girl!

I am ever

Most truly your

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

FOR Heaven's sake, my amiable friend! was Mr. Norton's passion for you any thing new?—Certainly no circumstance was ever plainer!—Ah! how deserving is he of your friendship!—So lively, yet so polite! So sensible, yet so diffident!—Why, Louisa, cannot—But I have done—Your heart is engaged, and all the virtues we are charmed with in Mr. Norton, have also centered, with accumulated lustre, in the person of Sir Charles Montague.—How go you on?—Surely after what has passed, you are no longer the slave of anxiety!—Depend upon it, Sir Charles will very soon make you acquainted with the preference he gives you. Be also convinced, that he is furnished with reasons he holds good for having so long kept you in suspense. That a *worthy* man (in the full force of that appellation) should act inconsistently with *that* character in the most trivial point, has ever appeared a paradox to me: therefore, I cannot form a *notion* of the uncertainty of his declaration.—However, be speedy in informing me of your transactions.

Lady Percival tells me, that it is strongly rumoured amongst several of her acquaintances, that I am shortly to marry Lord Seymour; whilst others pretend to more knowledge, and say, that I have dismissed him, and listen to Lord Budenall.—“Let them say what they will, dear Lady Percival,” cried I; “the world will *talk*, and, if it prevents, for ever so short a time, more censorious conversation, is welcome to make connections for me I never thought of.” Lord Seymour tries by perseverance to gain my favour—“Give yourself no more trouble, my Lord—My good opinion you have ever had; my grateful esteem you will always command; but to make yourself master of my affections, is an impossibility,

bility, and without them I will never bestow my hand." This I have said often to him—He sighs—and answers—"Ah! Lady Julia!—you love some happy object—it is that which causes you to be thus insensible to my misery."—It is in vain to protest that my heart is free—He looks with a suspicious eye on each man that approaches me:—nay, this very evening he presumed to tell me *he had discovered the incognito who possessed my heart, and had so well barricaded each avenue to it, that no rival could gain access.* I turned from him, with a very vexed air I believe, and made him no answer.—He followed, and repeated what he had said. I replied, *he was welcome to make what conjectures he pleased; as they did not AFFECT ME, they could not OFFEND ME.* He looked in a passion, and sat sullen the rest of the evening.

What an infatuation must there be in cards, that they can chain people to them for so many hours together!—How agitated have I seen a beautiful countenance at the falling of a duce, a knave, &c. &c.—and after all, for what?—Why, for the despicable hope of gaining, or fear of losing, a few paltry pieces of ore.—I was drawn into many cross reflections on this subject, by being obliged to sit a tedious while at whist; and should have remained much longer at it, had not Mr. Montague (Sir Charles's first cousin) obligingly taken my cards at my request.—But with this aversion, how terrible a figure would your friend make in the *beau monde*, did she not endeavour to conceal it!—I certainly should be expelled the society of our modern *beaux* and *belles*—be called "*a perfect hyæna.*"—and stared at as something horrible when I appeared in public. What a tyrant is custom! It subjects us to mix with characters not suited to our taste, and to adopt foibles we despise. "To appear singular" (as a much celebrated author says) "shews something amiss either in the heart or head;" to avoid which, we must accord to times and modes, provided our principles start not at them.—Good night, dear Louisa!

* * * * *

Tuesday, Three o'Clock.

We have been amusing ourselves all the morning with seeing the gentlemen skait on the canal in Kensington Gardens. Lady Pemberton, Lady Percival, Almeria and myself, agreed to walk there, and return in the coach: my brother, Col. Elliot, Sir James Westbrook, and Mr. Montague, attended us. Several gentlemen had appointed to meet us at the canal, provided the frost continued as impenetrable as it then was. Accordingly, on our arrival, most of them were *shewing-off* all the airs and attitudes so graceful an exercise admits of. Was my heart to be caught by external perfection only, it would indubitably be in danger of falling a victim to a handsome figure in the inimitable movement of skaiting. This idea struck me on beholding my brother. You cannot think how charmingly he looked!—You may laugh, Louisa, at my vanity,—but I assure you, I was not singular in my admiration of him.—Lady Walpole, Miss Pelham, and Miss Edgcumb came to us, as they had promised to do. My heart felt for the latter, whose eyes spoke unutterable love for Lord Pemberton: she could observe no one but him. Finding it very cold, I laid hold of Miss Edgcumb's arm, and we strolled at a small distance from the rest, to put a little warmth into our limbs; which we complained had lost all feeling, from remaining so long without stirring. Lord Pemberton took off his skaits, and running between us, vowed he would interrupt a *tête-à-tête*. “Will you not permit me, my charming Miss Edgcumb?” cried he. “Your Lordship will make us very happy by giving us your company,” answered the sweet girl. She seemed so confused—so pleased, and devoured with so greedy an ear the compliments he paid her, that I should soon have discovered, had I not done it before, which way her choice turned in wishing for an adorer.—My affection for this excellent girl makes me delirious she would transfer her inclinations to some other deserving

serving object ; for I am sure my brother will never marry any but Sophia Nevill, his first cousin. Lord Pemberton whilst a child (they say) was always unhappy when from her : the attachment was reciprocal, and has continued inviolable and unabated to this day. She is exactly ten months older than I am ; her person is exquisitely handsome ; she is sensible ; and her heart is one of the best that ever was created ; her temper all gentleness and sweetness. — Judge by this description, if they are not formed for each other !

The Duke of Northington could not bear the thought of sending Sophia abroad when my mother carried us.—He had but just lost his wife ; she was his only child, and to part with all the comfort he had, was too much. At last, finding it necessary to complete her education, he summoned up resolution, and carried her over to Paris some little time before Lady Pemberton left it ; which is the reason you were not acquainted, as you quitted the convent above two years before my sister Caroline and I did. The places my uncle held in England prevented a longer absence from thence than two or three months, or I believe he would have settled as near her as possible. My mother returned at the time she allotted, after having voluntarily banished herself five years, that her daughters might doubly benefit by the advantage of foreign improvements received under the immediate inspection of her own eye. She had an elegant *chateau* taken in Paris for herself, carried us over, and put us under the tuition of her very particular friend, our much loved Superior. She visited us daily, taking us out now and then, as you may remember, to spend a week or fortnight with her, by which means we had an opportunity of knowing the best company that inhabit, and constantly resort to, that charming city. Caroline and I were happy to attend Lady Pemberton to England ; but Almeria was like one frantic at the idea of leaving her friend behind—nor was the soul of Sophia less agitated.

My

My uncle prevailed on his amiable sister to let Almeria stay a year longer, which she the more readily agreed to, as my sister was extremely young. Lady Pemberton would have remained herself, but for the indispensable engagement she was under to Lord Mortimer, to bring my sister to England the year after he had seen and made proposals for her at Paris.

Two months ago the Duke went over, and brought his daughter and niece to England. He has a fine seat between Dover and Canterbury, where the late Duchess's mother is fond of residing. Sophia is now with her at this place, and there Almeria (as I told you) passed a week in her way to London. I apprehend my brother will have the nuptials completed as soon as possible. I already love Lady Sophia with the affection due to a sister.

I will conclude this with a wish that my sensations this night at Covent-Garden play-house may be exactly opposite to those I experienced the last time I was there.—I am, my Louisa, your faithful

JULIA HERBERT.

To Sir EDWARD FITZWILLIAMS.

Clarges-Street.

COME, my friend, and exult!—Come and behold your once lively Elliot, who defied the power of female charms, fallen an humble victim at the shrine of beauty, and sighing at the feet of the most obdurate woman in England—Yes, Fitzwilliams,—

“The haughty, gallant, gay Lothario”—

is totally metamorphosed—No more does one of those epithets belong to *me*—no more must you fly to *me* for counsel—Your application came at the worst nick of time.—What, tho' your Sophia despises you—I could lay ten to one that her *lover* is
not

not more scorned than Almeria Herbert's.—I cannot say, "Forget her, Fitzwilliams!"——My own heart bears witness that I should recommend an impossibility to you.

Too confident of my insensibility, and laughing at love (at least in the romantic sense of the word), I thought to have flirted with Lady Almeria,—and quitted her when tired of the amusement (the way with us all); but how have I mistaken my own strength, and her merit!—You have never seen Lady Almeria---take a short sketch of her beautiful person:

She has the most delightful dark blue eyes I ever beheld—at one moment they are all softness and trembling sensibility—at another, replete with fire and vivacity; long silken eye-lashes infringe them—Her nose is very handsome—Her lips the vivid colour of vermillion: ten thousand dimples and little Cupids ambush about them: when they open, they discover two rows of the finest pearl set in coral—Her skin is white as the lily—Her cheeks are tinged with a lovely red—Her face is well turned, inclining rather to a round than an oval—Her hair is a light brown: art cannot confine it; several locks curl about the prettiest forehead in the world—She has a dimple in the center of her chin, that would, without any other beauty, captivate hearts by dozens—Her stature is tall; every limb seems turned with the strictest symmetry: her figure is really elegant beyond description.—What shall I say of her mind?—a mind formed by Minerva, and improved by the Muses!—I should injure her in attempting to delineate it; for no words can do it justice.—Lady Almeria is mistress of every accomplishment: she excels in each, more particularly in dancing and music;—she sings like an angel, and is always ready to oblige, when called upon.

I have inevitably lost my heart, Fitzwilliams.—The truant will never more return to its master.—

I was by some accident left alone with the sweet

Almeria the other morning—By an irresistible impulse I dropped on one knee, seized her hand, and presumptuously stammered out “I love you!”—She blushed indeed—but it was with indignation; and, having assured me (in a manner mortifyingly indifferent) that my gallantry was lost on her, with the utmost composure asked *How I liked the new opera?* I know not what answer I made, but, hurt to the soul, I hastily arose, and wished her a good morning—I endeavoured to assume an air of *sang froid*.——I met Lord Pemberton on the stairs. I am sure he must have observed my confusion, though he was delicate enough to take no notice of it.—

Last night I saw Lady Pemberton, her two *paragons*, Lady Percival, and some others of the party, at the Festino.—I thought Lady Almeria never looked so divinely.—I asked her to dance: she *thanked me*; *she was engaged to Sir John Benyon*—He, happy man! was her partner for the night—had leave to whisper in her ear,—to take her snowy hand!—Ah! Fitzwilliams! does hell afford greater pangs than I endured last night!—Once I perceived a seat vacant by her; I flew to it——“Lady Almeria,” cried I, “deign to hear me; vouchsafe to look with pity on the wretched Elliot;—suffer me to paint my love—my misery!” She laughed and exclaimed, “What still that melancholy face! Why, your looks are enough to inspire me with *ennui*.——If love puts on such a countenance, Heaven defend me from it!—For God’s sake, resume the *agreeable*—you do not know how much better it becomes you.”—“Charming-vivacity!” returned I; “but do not jest thus, dear Lady Almeria, with a heart oppressed.”——“I wish you would follow my example,” said she, “and *jest* too; then I should like to listen to you, as I used to do—but now!—you are so serious!—and I hate serious people.” As she ended, she gave her hand to the exulting Benyon, who waited for her to rejoin the dance. She loves him,

him, my friend! Her eyes, her expressive eyes confess it; and I am doomed to wretchedness!—Once, as I stood near them, I heard him say, “Ah! Lady Almeria, none loves like me!” She smiled on Benyon—the *happy* Benyon! with benignity and sweetness.——On my soul, my Edward, I cursed and envied him.

I am not so blinded by my passion, as not to wish, if Sir John Benyon is the man she prefers, that he may make her blessed—But oh! can I bear to see her give herself to another! It will be a dreadful circumstance.——Yet how selfish, how romantic are my notions! My fortune so small——I never wished it greater till I knew Lady Almeria. And would I subject the woman I doat on, to undergo a thousand little inconveniences that from the splendour of her situation she has hitherto been a stranger to! Perish the thought! Well then, Fitzwilliams, I will take the hardy resolution of abandoning her;—no more shall her ear be tormented with my love—I yield it (with reluctance) to a worthier object; no more shall I have the rapturous enjoyment of leading her in the dance—of listening to the harmonious accents of her voice;—no more shall I sit behind her at the opera, and observe, with transport, the admiring eyes of each beholder fastened on her.——I *will* quit my Almeria,—and the only consolation left me will be in going over again in idea the happy moments I have passed in her company, and in bestowing a few sighs on the manes of my departed joys.

I have a good opportunity of putting my resolution in force—this minute have I heard, that my regiment is ordered immediately to America. *There*, if my prophetic spirit says true,—I shall either acquire fame and fortune enough to make me more deserving of Lady Almeria, or at once be released from the misery that corrodes the breast of,

Your faithful friend,

CHARLES ELLIOT.

100 MASQUERADES; OR,

P. S. I know you will call me a mad-man—but, if it saves me from absolute despair, let me enjoy my insanity. I hope to see you ere I leave London; in the mean time, adieu!

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Southampton, Monday Night.

LAST Thursday evening a large party supped with us, after our having danced cotillons from nine o'clock till twelve.—Sir Charles offered me his hand for the first dance. He was particularly attentive to me all the night, though I was not happy enough to have him constantly for my partner. His eyes spoke to your Louisa a language that his tongue has never used:—they told me, *that his heart was devoted to me.*—How mine palpitated!—Ah, my Julia! Sir Charles followed this plan once before.—I must not be a second time deceived by *les yeux doux*, and pressures of the hand:—and yet!—ah! Julia! he is dear—very dear to me!

* * * * *

It was proposed, and immediately agreed to, that we should make an excursion to B*****y to-morrow. We shall be a large assemblage; not less than seventeen or eighteen in number. Lord Arne piques himself on his choice of agreeable persons in composing a party; this, he boasts, will be very select. *Entre nous*, I seldom found the expectation answered, when much raised on such occasions; but I hope my good Lord will meet no disappointment to his. Lord and Lady Arne, Miss Wrottesley, Mr. Bishop, Sir Charles and myself, are to ride to B*****y; the rest go in chaises. I am informed that Col. Worthley is below, and that I am wanted at the card-table.

* * * * *

Tuesday

Tuesday Morning.

We are preparing to set out: the morning is beautiful, and every thing promises well for our passing an agreeable day—

So! Miss Wrottesley has changed her mind, and begs to be excused from riding, as she is no very good horse-woman, and will only terrify us with her fears; therefore chuses to accompany Mrs. Nelson in her chaise. Mr. Bishop, too, has sent an apology: sudden business calls him to London.—Nay, my good Lord Arne! do not fret; we shall do very well without him.—Sir Charles waits to put me on my horse.—I must leave you, my spirits are not in the highest order for a party; but no matter.

* * * * *

We are just returned---you will be surpris'd at what I am going to relate---Judge after you have read it, whether I am at peace or not.

Sir Charles's horse and mine, being rather more spirited, were unwilling to keep the pace of Lord and Lady Arne's.—I believe that Montague put his on his mettle intentionally; my Caro, he knew, would get into as swift a canter. After a few minutes we threw Lord and Lady Arne far behind us; then, slackening our pace, admired the country---the beautiful prospects of wood and water, &c. with which it abounds.

Sir Charles asked me *if ever I had been at B*****y?* Once, I told him, *with Lady Pemberton and you, before I went abroad, and I was such a child then, I could not remember any thing of the place.* He begged to know *if I did not leave the Convent of—some time before you did?* I answered in the affirmative. He replied, “I knew the Superiour—she was amazingly clever, and altogether as amiable, I believe. She died before your friend left Paris, Lady Louisa?” “No, Sir, but soon after.”—“Indeed!”—then paused, as if full of thought.—“It is very odd!”—“What is, Sir Charles, *very odd?*” “I beg your Ladyship's pardon---nothing material
F 3 ---I just

---I just recollected a trivial circumstance which happened whilst I was at Paris, not worthy of engaging your attention a moment."

You have forbid me, my Julia, to mention to you the name of a *certain person* ; else I would tell you how warmly Sir Charles commended your delicacy—your spirit in rejecting him. He bestowed more encomiums on your sense, your temper, your form, than you would chuse to hear repeated. He concluded his panegyric, by asking, *If I imagined Lord Seymour would be possessor of so inestimable a treasure as Julia Herbert ?* I said, *I was convinced not ; that you had already discarded him ; and that you seldom wavered in your resolutions.* Thus he replied :

"It is astonishing what objection Lady Julia can make to that young nobleman. He has worth, title, birth, person, and fortune, to recommend him.—Surely, Lady Louisa, the world will think your friend is attached to some fortunate object, whom we have not yet discovered !" He pretended to say this jocularly---but, if you will believe me, he looked most inquisitively for my answer. You can guess what that was. Sir Charles *declared you were very cruel, and hoped I was not determined to follow your example in that point.* I said, *I wished to copy so good a one in every respect.*

"And you really, then, Lady Louisa, are resolved to act like the fair Julia, and give no attention to our sex on a subject so essential to our felicity!---You have both vowed never to listen to us!"---"We have no determination concerning your sex, Sir Charles. We are both very young, and in no hurry to part with certain, for very uncertain happiness."

"Report informed me, my Lady, that, soon after my arrival in England, I was to address you by another name---that Sydney was no more to be remembered."

"Reports are not always to be believed, you find, Sir Charles."

"That

"That blush---those downcast eyes, Louisa, are traitors to your inclination---they inform against your wishes, and tell me your heart is attached."

"You are right---it is *attached*---attached to many amiable persons."

"Cruel Lady Louisa!---Do not trifle when my happiness is at stake. Let me seize this"-----

"Observe, Sir Charles, how far behind Lord and Lady Arne are; we must wait for them a few minutes." I stopped my horse---Julia, how my heart fluttered!

"Lady Louisa, you must proceed-- my impatient soul will no longer brook delay---For Heaven's sake, oblige me!"

"You are in a very uncommon mood, Sir Charles ---I must positively stay for Lady Arne---I have been sufficiently rude to her already.---The morning is remarkably fine! What a charming point of view that spire forms!---You will say this was a low species of art, and as common as it is low---Admitted; yet, I could not help it---my spirits were weak---and I believe I should have behaved ridiculously, had I permitted him to enter upon so important a subject so abruptly. Our amiable pair joined us, and I never quitted Lady Arne during the remainder of our ride. Sir Charles became on the sudden very grave. We reached B*****y---our party assembled ---they were all talkative and loud, except Sir Charles, whose melancholy continued throughout the day, and was noticed by each person.—My bosom throbbed with alarms.---How distressing were my reflections! They told me my behaviour to Montague had been *childishly flippant*, and had disgusted him. If so, what would be my fate, but exquisite wretchedness? I endeavoured to atone by being attentive to him.---Still, I know, there must have appeared so much constraint in that *attention*, as defeated the purpose for which it was offered. At dinner he avoided sitting next to me---He shunned every occasion that presented of speaking with

me afterwards,—but, with his eyes bent on the ground, and his arms folded, was regardless of every creature, and each circumstance that passed. Tea and coffee over, the chaises were ordered—Lord Arne and Sir Charles returned in my Lord's; Lady Arne and myself in mine—the rest of the company as they came.

“Dear Louisa,” said my friend, as we drove off, “what is the matter with Sir Charles? I threw my arms round her neck, and burst into tears, “I have lost him, Madam—lost him for ever.”

“Good Heaven! Is Miss Stephenson then”——

“Ah, no! my own folly has been the occasion.”

As soon as my voice became articulate enough, I represented to her what had passed between Montague and myself. She endeavoured to console me by assurances *that Sir Charles could not think unjustly of me; which, she said, he must do, if he took my behaviour in any other light than that occasioned by timidity and delicacy.*

Lord Arne protested, on our return to his house, that none of the party should separate till after supper. Sir Charles begged to be excused. “Lady Louisa, come hither, said my Lord.—I went. He took my hand; “I am sure Montague will not, cannot be deaf to your entreaties—beseech him not to leave us, and to assume more spirits than he has worn all day.” He put my hand into Sir Charles's, then turned off, and left him to listen to my solicitations. “If I have any influence, Sir”——

“What a word, my Lady!—*If!*—Who has so much with me?—Let me think you desire me near you but for one instant, and I am the most blessed of men.”——“You will stay, Sir Charles?” “Undoubtedly, Madam.”——“And be in better spirits?” “That must absolutely depend on your Ladyship.

——If I am despised by you, you will not condemn me for suffering my countenance to correspond with the misery of my heart—I cannot dissemble.”

——“Is it possible to imagine I can *despise* one I have
ever

ever regarded so much!"—"Say *that* regard continues." "It does indeed."—"I must yet be more unreasonable, and ask another favour—Permit me to attend you to-morrow evening, and resume the subject you so unkindly prevented my speaking on this morning." "Bless me, Sir Charles!—What can you have so particu"———"When you reflect on the consequence to our sex of knowing your merit, you can easily judge what the subject of my conversation will be.—You do not refuse me—Ten thousand thanks, my Louisa!"—and in a hurrying manner he was about to leave me, lest I should put a negative on his request.—"Sir Charles!"—"Dear Lady Louisa, no more!—My Lord, your fair advocate comes off conqueror in every cause she undertakes———I am at your Lordship's devotion."

Musick is called for—I begged Lady Arne to give me one half hour.—She assented; and the more readily, she told me, as she perceived my countenance brightened, and knew that I wished to convey the pleasing intelligence of my being happy to my sweet Julia. I left the drawing-room in a short time after my conference with Sir Charles.

How much obliged to Lord Arne, am I!—but for him, what dreadful moments should I pass this night! My Lord is yet a stranger, I believe, to the manner in which Sir Charles and I were circumstanced,—unless Montague told him in their way home! If so, how delicately did he bring about an opportunity for an explanation!—I am interrupted—Lady Arne is in my closet, she complains that I have doubled the portion of time allowed me—they have been dancing this hour.—What room have I for further pleasure? To send my thoughts from the transactions of this day, will be to banish them from happiness.—But is not Montague below? Yet the unaccountable reserve I feel when I speak to him (since the latter part of his conversation this morning) in some measure damps the joy of a heart replete with affection for him.—Why should it be so?

—'Tis right; nature inspires it to aid the virgin delicacy, so deservedly the admiration of all persons in every age.—

Dear Lady Arne, I attend you.

* * * * *

Wednesday Noon.

Such a change as I found in Sir Charles's spirits, when I returned to the company last night, is not to be described. He was all gaiety and life. We did not break up till three o'clock this morning.--- Ah! my Julia! that this evening was well over! I dread its approach. How shall I behave! Adieu till to-morrow.

* * * * *

Thursday Morning.

About eight o'clock Sir Charles came. Lord Arne was engaged to a party at Sir William Wrottesley's. In half an hour after Montague entered my Lord took his leave; and Lady Arne begged our excuse for a little while, saying *she was under a necessity of writing a letter*. When she retired, I thought I should have fainted.——I am certain Sir Charles perceived it; for as he drew his chair near mine, he uttered, in a low voice, "Surely, Lady Louisa can be under no anxiety at the honour she confers on one so much devoted to her as I am!" He threw down his eyes, and gave me time to gain more confidence; which I the sooner did, from his amiable behaviour.

All declarations of Love, I believe, are expressed in much the same words, and only differ in the manner of delivering them. Some do it awkwardly, as if ashamed of the passion with which they are inspired; whilst other men seem to glory in it, and speak without constraint the sentiments of their hearts, at the same time keeping the strictest delicacy always in view. I need not say that Sir Charles pursued this latter mode---To tell you more, will be to tire you

you with a repetition of what has been so often spoken to yourself by different people. When he finished what he had to say, I replied :

“ I should think myself very unworthy of the sentiments you profess for me, Sir, were I capable of acting with disguise. To affect an indifference I do not feel, for no other motive than to give pain to an amiable heart, is beneath me. Your distinction reflects the highest honour on me ; and I will confess myself flattered at it.---Still I must not accept of the preference you offer, without the approbation of one, whose consanguinity, whose fraternal tenderness, give him a right to interpose in every circumstance of my life, and without whose sanction I never will bestow my hand.”

“ If that is the only obstacle to my wishes,” cried he, “ I am the happiest of men!--Lord Clermont is no stranger to my attachment to your Ladyship ; I acquainted him with it just before I left Italy, and that I hoped I had his consent to address you---He made me vain, by saying, he knew no man he would sooner give his Louisa to—but feared my application was to no purpose ; for he thought it probable I should find you in the arms of another, on my arrival in England.---My better destiny interfered and saved you---I trust, to bless me!---Forgive, my dear Madam, this late avowal---To have spoken sooner was my wish, but I did not think it would have been adhering to the etiquette of delicacy to have done it so immediately on the dismissal of an unfortunate man : besides, a just diffidence of myself made me fearful of being rejected--and suspense for a little while (in my opinion) is better than a dreadful certainty.---This very night, I will have the honour of writing to my Lord, and of making such proposals as, I believe, he will not disapprove of.”

“ There is no reason, Sir Charles, that you should be so precipitate---my brother will soon be over, and then”——“ Forgive me, dear Louisa, if I dissent

dissent from you there—there is great reason—My impatience will not let this night pass over my head without informing Clermont what has been the result of it.”

“Sir George Sommerville has always acted the parent’s part ———

“My dear Madam! do you suppose that I could have any intention of soliciting the honour of your hand, without meaning to pay your uncle every compliment due to him? I will lose no time in writing to him, and shall be happy to consult him on what he will think proper to have done for his—and, suffer me *now* to say, my Louisa. I have had strong proofs of Sir George’s friendship. I trust that I may yet depend upon it, especially in the most important circumstance of my life!—And thus let me, sweet Louisa,” dropping on his knee, and kissing my hand, “thank you for the favour you have shewn me—My tongue is a bad herald to my heart — it cannot tell its feelings.”

Lady Arne soon after came in, and Sir Charles in a quarter of an hour excused himself to her for not accepting her invitation to supper, and retired.

Ah, my Julia! how do I deserve the happiness that awaits me in a union with so amiable a man!—Make me worthy of him, gracious Heaven! or take me from the supreme felicity of calling him mine! I can give up life to prevent his being miserable—without him life would be now a torment, and could not be long endured by

Your ever affectionate

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

I Congratulate you, my much-loved friend, on the accomplishment of your wishes. I trust you will,
some

some years hence, commemorate the transactions of the past week, with the same satisfaction that is excited in my bosom by the description of your happiness!—Why are you dissident of yourself? I am displeased at it, and think, oh Montague! thy fate has been a propitious one, in gaining the affections of such a girl as Louisa Sidney!—May you prove deserving of them!—I doubt not that you will! In that case my fair friend has every felicity to hope for.—I must prepare to attend Lady Pemberton and my sister to a ball given by Lady Danvers. I am desired to put on my *best airs*, and to summon all the Graces to my aid that will listen to my invocation.—You will guess that my brother gives me these injunctions, yet he assigns no reason for them.—I suppose that he meditates a scheme of having Lord Osmond for a *brother-in-law*, who arrived a few days ago (I am informed), and will in all probability be amongst the numerous throng in Grosvenor-Square this night. I am impatient to see this nonpareil—Do you never smile, Louisa, at the *fears*, which so lately molested you, of Sir Charles's meaning to promote a connection between you and my Lord?—Report says, that the Duke of Westmorland intends him for Lady Henrietta Marchmont; an amiable young woman I believe, but not at all indebted to the capricious Goddess of Beauty for any personal attraction: which deficiency Fortune was determined to make up for, and has distinguished Lady Henrietta as one of her first favourites, by granting her the *unconscionable* sum of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, with the addition of an estate of fifteen hundred a year, that was purchased with some of the *superfluous rupees* that Lord Davenport brought with him from the East Indies, and settled on her when she was ten years old. *Son Pere, toujours genereux*, has been ever since accumulating the principal and interest of it for her, which he declares is to be paid, with the capital I before mentioned, to Lord Osmond on the day

110 MASQUERADES; OR,

day of marriage. The Duke of Westmorland is confidently said to be a passionate admirer of the *dirty pelf* so much sought after by thousands. If we are to judge, as an Italian author does, who says, "That children generally inherit the particular virtue or vice of the parent," we shall conclude that *the Lord Osmond* makes Plutus the deity to whom he sacrifices, as well as his father. Avarice is a detestable thing in age—then what must it be in youth?—The more shocking for being unnatural. —"But take notice, Julia, as yet you know not that this young nobleman is tainted with the fault you declaim against!—You are right, Louisa,—and I have done.

You will be sorry to hear that the agreeable Colonel Elliot leaves London to-morrow for Portsmouth; from whence he is to embark for America. —We shall meet this night, perhaps for the last time.—Poor Colonel Elliot!—The subject is painful—To lose an amiable friend, like him, must cause melancholy to diffuse itself over the hearts of such as have sensibility enough to feel so great a loss.—What adds to my concern is, that he goes away miserable—his attachment to my sister is no longer concealed.

Adieu, my best Louisa,

JULIA HERBERT.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

I Wrote to you, my dear Montague, immediately on my arrival in London; but had only time to give a positive charge, that you should not leave your Louisa a minute sooner than you proposed doing before you heard of my being in London. Great as my impatience is to see you, I now enforce that command. I know but too well what transports must attend the sweet society of the woman we love, to wish to rob you a moment of such a happiness.

happiness.—Besides, it is the height of my ambition to make myself pleasing to Lady Louisa, and certainly it would be acting inconsistently with that desire, to deprive her of you, even for a day! Therefore do not stir, I insist.

My father received me with tenderness—more indeed than I expected, from the reluctance with which he *seemed* to consent to my returning.—How is it to be accounted for, that he should prefer my residing abroad, at a time, when most fathers are anxious——But no more—it proceeds not from aversion I hope, and I will pry no further.

The Duke thinks (and very justly) that he has a right to engross my company entirely for the first fortnight after our meeting. He *declares he has many things to say to me*. One particular subject seems to hover on his lips, but has never yet passed their limits.—Oh! that it never may!

You will of course know that I have been no where in public—An engagement I had to attend my father to Windsor, prevented my obeying Lady Danvers's invitation to a ball the night before last—Our friend Belfield (who, I told you in my last, accompanied me from Paris) was at it—he is charmed—delighted—and in ecstacy, when he speaks of the beauties that were assembled there. Observe what he told me of a lady, who, he said, “is the beauty of the world”—Thus he worded his account:

“Soon after I went into the great dancing room, I was struck with a view of the most lovely young creature I ever beheld:

“She look'd a Goddess, and she mov'd a Queen.”

I gazed with rapture on her, and, turning to Buddenall, begged him to inform me of her name. He replied, “It is one of the Lady Herbert's a sister of Pemberton's.” I perceived a genteel *cavalier* (whom I afterwards found to be Lord Seymour)

very

very attentive to her; and once, as I drew near, overheard him say, "Unless you mean, adorable Lady Julia! to make me the happiest of my sex, speak not to me in this flattering, kind manner:" and some time after he again exclaimed, "Ah, Lady Julia! now you are altogether as cruel!—but I will not complain." Immediately as this was spoken, Budenall went to her, and presented his hand. She instantly put hers into it, and joined the dancers. I fought out Pemberton, and upbraided him for not introducing me to his delightful family. He led me to Lady Pemberton, and Lady Almeria Herbert, who were in the cotillon room, the latter just preparing to exhibit her elegant figure in a cotillon. She is a charming, beautiful girl, but not so much in my style of beauty as her sister is. When Lady Julia had finished her dance, her brother presented me to her. I told her in French, *that I was very solicitous to join in the general admiration that so much loveliness inspired*: and, turning rather aside to Pemberton, said in Italian, "She is the most divine girl I ever saw!—Imagination cannot picture so beautiful a creature!"—Upon my soul, Osmond, I meant not that she should have understood me—I observed she blushed exceedingly, and that Seymour, Budenall, and Mr. Montague, who were standing by, threw their eyes upon her, as if they felt for the confusion my unguarded speech must have excited in her fair bosom. Pemberton answered in Italian—"You will make my sister vain, my Lord!"—I begged her pardon—She must have seen that I was devilishly embarrassed myself."—

Well, Montague! what think you of this gallant Count? He has already forgotten the dames of Italy and France, and will, I believe, throw them *au desespoir*, by endeavouring to carry over Lady Julia *Madame la Comtesse de Belfelde*. You will suppose his rapturous manner of speaking of her is highly diverting. I could wish to have been by, when he was so *severely struck* with one of the blind urchin's

urchin's weapon's: I suspect, that, to *evince* his love, like Foigard's French Count, "he danced, and he laughed, and he sang," &c.—

Does not this trifling manner of writing bespeak a heart at ease?—Have you not already formed an expectation of my having, from change of scene and objects, in some measure lost the pangs that tore my breast in pieces?—If you have, you know but little of me!—Never was man so attached—never was man so determined upon any point as I am how to act in this case.—I foresee it will occasion a breach between my father and me; but I cannot give up my own happiness unreasonably—No tie can warrant that—His displeasure is all I dread incurring—his fortune I value not.—I am convinced that you think me *strangely out of the way*, as I have heard people say of delirious patients; nor can I quarrel with you for it—but, when you behold the object of my desire, your astonishment will cease, and my taste be applauded.—But where, Montague, am I to find her? Oh, my better stars, direct me!—I must quit this subject, and abruptly bid you farewell.

OSMOND.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Southampton.

YOUR Louisa's heart, my Julia, is replete with every sentiment of gratitude for the interest you always take in her happiness.—To study to deserve your affection, will be the best means to ensure it.

I am desirous to hear your description of Lord Osmond—my once much-dreaded lover!—I do indeed laugh at the anxieties which invaded me on his account. Sir Charles is never more delighted than when expatiating on the merit of Osmond—Not a word escapes him relative to the connection you speak of;—perhaps it is *mere* report. Montague's intention was, to have flown to his friend immediately

ly on his arrival ; but he had *positive orders* from him not to leave Southampton. I know not why, but my curiosity was exceedingly excited to see the letter Sir Charles received from him yesterday. He read the first paragraph of it to me, in which I was spoken of, and not a syllable more. I would not for the universe have appeared anxious to know further of the contents,—therefore could not ask any questions ; but I dare say, Lord Osmond had the honour of your hand for part of the night at Lady Danvers's. I depend on your writing me, whether he is the *superlative* handsome creature that every one says he is.—Dear Julia, I wish—I will not tell you what—lest you should turn up your rosy lip at it.

Sir Charles is determined to go up to town the day after to-morrow ; his impatience to see his Osmond will brook no longer delay. How can I part with him !—There is no describing to you the agreeable manner in which we pass our time : amusements that were hateful to me a fortnight ago, are now delightfully pleasing.—This is easily accounted for. We are preparing to ride. Adieu, my ever dearest Julia !

Your faithful

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

WE had a superb ball at Lady Danvers's—the company very numerous, yet well chosen—I believe every handsome woman of distinction in London was at it—I never saw a greater display of beautiful faces in my life. The whole suite of rooms were appropriated for different dances, and for refreshments : they were illuminated, and adorned most sumptuously.—The supper and attendants were in character with the rest, all equally magnificent.

I danced

I danced a great deal, and with a variety of partners. Almeria, who (without partiality) excels in this accomplishment, is very fond of it; she therefore was not the first that gave over dancing.

I was introduced to one of the most *gallant* Frenchmen (I believe he is a son of Gallia) that ever I met with. Lady Mary Athill would be charmed, Louisa, with the Count de Belfielde, his compliments are so very correspondent to her taste. I now guess the reason of my brother's sollicitude about our dress: he wished us to appear well in the eyes of this foreigner, to whom he pays great attention. His figure and manner are elegant enough. I cannot say I admire him much; he is too forward and assured I think—however, I ought not to say this, having seen so little of him.—Sir Charles Montague knows him certainly, for I heard the Count *make honorable mention* of him to Lord Pemberton.

Some time after I entered the great room, Lord Seymour came up to me, and told me, *If he might presume to judge by my countenance, I possessed better spirits than I had a few nights before.* I answered, *they were in general very even, but that it was not impossible they might be raised at that moment; as nothing would sooner produce such an effect than the sight of his Lordship; a pleasure I had been deprived of for several days.* Poor Lord Seymour was pinned to my sleeve, Louisa, for the rest of the night. But who do you think he discovered to be the *lord* of my affections?—Mr. Montague. I asked *what gave rise to such an idea?*

He begged my pardon for his free method of speaking the other night, and owned envy had urged him to believe that I could not listen to Mr. Montague's melting conversation, or attend to the language of his eyes, which evidently tell the object of their wishes, without feeling an emotion for him that would make him the happiest of men; and added, "his intrinsic worth, and the attractions of his person, must make him a formidable rival." You may imagine that I dissipated his fears
of

of Mr. Montague's ever being connected with me; and at the same time assured Lord Seymour, that I meant not to give HIM the slightest encouragement to speak on a subject very disagreeable to me.—I also entreated he would not be unkind enough to hinder me from conversing with him as a friend; a circumstance that must unavoidably happen, if he resumed the old topick. He replied, I was very cruel, but he would not complain. I really regard this amiable young man sincerely,—but cannot bring myself to do it in the way he wishes.

I looked incessantly for that “*earth-treading star*,” Lord Osmond, and expected in every tolerable new face that approached the room where I was, to behold him—I listened after every rap, hoping to have heard him announced.—At last my patience was quite exhausted; and I asked Lord Budenall if he was there? He said no. I wondered at it. The reply was, “I suppose Lord Osmond does not chuse to go much into public till he has been at Court, where he has not yet made his appearance.” I really do not know the exact reason of his absence from such an assembly, but it is natural to form *that* conjecture.”—My curiosity was sadly disappointed!

Lord and Lady Mortimer arrived in town three days ago.—She was at Lady Danvers's; but is become so *fine*, as to dislike dancing herself, of course was only a looker-on. I told her it was egregious affectation.—*Apropos*, Lady Henrietta Marchmont was in Grosvenor-Square; but I saw no sollicitude in her countenance for the entrance of her Marquis. She no doubt was apprised that he would not be there, and of the cause that hindered him. I was exceedingly provoked at my *ungracious* cousin Sir James Westbrook. He danced with Lord Osmond's mistress some time, and I found him afterwards making the greatest ridicule of poor Lady Henrietta, to my brother, Lord Seymour, and Mr. Montague; who, I am sorry to say, encouraged him, by laughing heartily at what he thought *wit*. I reproached Sir James for it; this was his *clever* reply:

“Now

"Now, Lady Julia, you are only angry because you cannot find out what the jest is; but I will be hanged if I inform you. Perhaps a kiss may extort it from Seymour; suppose you try! though should he tell it you, Pemberton must cut his throat: so you had better not urge the poor fellow to tempt his fate. I am sure my *fair* partner is obliged to you, for being so much interested in what she says and does! I thank you for her, and will acquaint her with your kindness."—You may imagine I was angry with Westbrook; I told him so, and that I would not speak to him again this month.—What an unfortunate sex is ours! Lady Henrietta, I dare say, said something very innocently, which her ungenerous partner put a wrong construction upon, and will make it a standing mark of ridicule against her for ever. Good Heaven! how should every word be weighed before we suffer it to drop from our lips! else we must be in the power of a set of creatures that are devoid of compassion, and endeavour to think as ill of us, as if they were to reap advantage from our depravity!

Pray, dear Louisa, are you so selfish as not to allow Sir Charles to come up to his Osmond for *even* a few hours! or has his adoration of you eradicated those impressions of friendship that he professed to be so *indelibly* marked on his heart?—I did hope that we should have been gratified with a sight of the *Baronet* on the arrival of my Lord, thinking it impossible that this *modern Pylades* and *Orestes* could be long in the same land without meeting. But I see every other passion yields to the more powerful one of love.

I flatter myself that this day's post will bring me a packet from Southampton. In that hope I bid adieu!

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Southampton.

SIR Charles has taken leave of me—He promises to return in a week; but what an age will that time appear to your Louisa!—I feel so awkward,—the town looks deserted!—I endeavoured a few minutes ago to laugh with Lady Arne, as if my heart was gay, and a tear trickled from each eye—What folly!—I was ashamed of it, and have retired to my room till I can behave with less emotion.—Only gone for *one week*, and all this uneasiness—again I repeat, What folly!

I received, a few days ago, a letter from Sir George Sommerville, filled with encomiums on this amiable man.—He tells me, that, to bestow my hand on Sir Charles, will give peace to his heart in his last moments, and let him descend into the grave without a pang for my happiness after his dissolution.

What felicity is mine, to afford so much pleasure to those I love, by following the immediate impulse of my own inclination!

Sir Charles told me he intended to make Petersfield his road to London, and to pass an hour at Sommerville-House, there to settle every preliminary to our union according to Sir George's approbation. I fear, Julia, he thinks of making great settlements; I have written to my uncle to intreat that he will not suffer it—Never was passion more disinterested than mine is. I am sure I may with just propriety say,

“I love him for *himself* alone.”

My stay at Southampton will not be much longer. I have informed Lady Sommerville that my health is established—and that I wish to have an opportunity of kissing her hand——

Your

Your letter is just brought me---I am rejoiced to hear you had so pleasant an evening in Grosvenor-Square, but lament your disappointment in not seeing Lord Osmond.

Why did you not mention Col. Elliot? Is he gone? My heart is sensible of the agonies another's must endure who loves hopelessly.—Ah, Julia! may we neither of us ever experience such misery!—You see how mistaken you were in supposing me selfish, or that Sir Charles had forgotten his friend.—Thus it ever is to form conjectures in a hurry!

I am going with Lady Arne to pay some morning visits, after which I must attend my toilet with much attention, as we dine four miles off, where we are to meet most of the principal inhabitants of this neighbourhood—but what pleasure can I have in adorning my person, when the only object, in whose eyes I am solicitous to appear well, every hour is carrying further and further from me!—Yet ought I not to justify his choice as much as possible in the opinion of others? Certainly!—Farewel till to-morrow.

* * * * *

Sunday Morning.

How temporary, my Julia, is every human felicity!—Where are now the gay prospects that gilded yesterday?—Fled!—and in their stead a rueful train of horrors fill your Louisa's imagination.

I was this morning at the drawing-room window, when I observed a chaise and four driving furiously into town. As it drew nearer I discovered Sir Charles's liveries, and soon recollected the face of one of his footmen who preceded the carriage.—I knew not what to conclude from so sudden a return, and could hardly credit my sight, till I saw Sir Charles himself alight from the chaise.—What words can paint my grief, at being informed, that my dear uncle's illness occasioned Montague's coming
back

back to Southampton! He arrived at Sommerville-House as they were about to dispatch an express to me, and, apprehending the shock it must give my spirits to be so abruptly alarmed, begged (painful as the office would be) to be the bearer of the melancholy tidings. He broke it to me in the gentlest manner.

How does affliction meliorate the heart!—Dear as Sir Charles is always to me, methinks he is twenty times more so in the character he now represents of the tender, consoling friend.—I look up to him for comfort like one bereft.—Ah, my dear uncle! if I lose you—Dreadful thought!—I cannot bear it.

I write while the carriage is preparing.—Lady Arne and her amiable husband are already waiting to undertake the journey with us to Sommerville-House.—My next letter will be from thence. Should one arrive this post from Portman-Square, Clairon will bring it with her to-morrow.—The coach is at the door—I am at all times, and in all situations, my beloved Julia,

Your faithful

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To the Same.

Sommerville-House.

ONCE more do I resume my correspondence from this place. We arrived here about six o'clock, and though we travelled as fast as the horses could put their feet to the ground, yet my anxious fears made the journey insupportably tedious. A thousand severe reproaches did I throw on myself for having suffered consideration to detain me so long from my uncle in his present infirm state; and really thought the painful alarm which called me so suddenly a just punishment for my unkindness.

I was

I was met at the great hall-door by Lady Sommersville: she embraced me with cordiality, while her speech was intercepted by tears!—Again did my observation occur, that distress bends the mind, and softens our sentiments.—Her Ladyship never before gave me so great an instance of tenderness. I enquired eagerly for Sir George, and was informed he was still very ill. I flew immediately to his room, where I beheld a spectacle that shocked me to the soul.—Ah, Julia! what ravages have been made on Sir George within these few months! I approached the sofa on which he was reclined, and, throwing myself on my knees, burst into tears.—On hearing my sobs (I could not suppress them) he turned, and, reaching out his arms to me, exclaimed,

“And is my Louisa come in time to close my eyes, and take my last blessing, ere my lips are stopped with dust!

“Oh, what an expression, my uncle!—Speak not to me thus—I cannot bear it!”

“Not bear to hear me speak of death, Louisa!—You would then divest me of comfort.—Was it not on your account, my poor girl, I should wish to encounter it this instant.—But oh!—how must I leave you unprotected!—Would to Heaven I had not granted your brother’s request of *remaining a year longer in Italy*!—An express shall be sent off to him to-morrow, if I am in as much danger as I am at present.—Are you quite recovered, Louisa?”

I said *I was*. He bowed his head as if to express the pleasure it gave him—complained of being exhausted from having spoken so much, and waved his hand for me to retire; which his attendants obliged me reluctantly to do, as they said the sight of me affected Sir George. As I descended the stairs I met Dr. J.—and Sir Charles going up to my uncle, accompanied by Lady Sommersville. I went into the music-parlour, which you know is next the stair-case: there I thought without interruption

I might have indulged my grief. I was absorbed in it, when I found my hand clasped in another's. I looked up, and saw Sir Charles kneeling before me. "Whence is it that my Louisa," cried he, "suffers herself to become a prey to unhappiness, at the time that Dr. J—— begins to have hopes of her uncle's getting the better of this last attack?—For Heaven's sake re-assume your spirits, and prepare to see Sir George, who asks for you! Compose yourself, dear Louisa, and let me attend you to him."

His voice—his expressions—soothed my soul; I gave him my hand,—and we both re-entered my uncle's room.

"Sir George," cried Montague, "I have been chiding your Louisa: she makes herself miserable about you, when we have all so much reason to rejoice at your being greatly recovered." He led me to a chair near Sir George, and retired.

"And may I hope my dear uncle will yet live to bless his Louisa?—or does Sir Charles flatter me?"—

"The change I find in myself within this hour is very great.—I ascribe it chiefly to the pleasure of seeing you, Louisa—Be that as it may, the paroxysm of my present disorder is passed—I have new spirits, and life itself feels renovated; therefore be comforted."

"Merciful Heaven, receive my thanks!" exclaimed I; and I embraced him.

"I want to have some conversation with you, Louisa, about Sir Charles Montague; but it cannot be now. He has honour, worth, alliance—every thing that can make a woman of sense and delicacy happy. All that I desire life for, is to see you married to him; and, as your brother is not in England, it would be an unlucky circumstance to lose me before the indissoluble knot is tied.—But no more of the subject at this time."—Dr. J—— entered, and gave me very comfortable assurances of my uncle's doing well for a good while. On his quitting

quitting the room, Sir George related to me several little matters that had passed in the family way during my absence, and seemed more chearful than I could have expected from the weak state he was in. About nine o'clock I took leave of Sir George for the night, and returned to company with better spirits than I went up possessed of.

My amiable Sir Charles sought an opportunity of entreating, *that, should the worst happen to my uncle that I could dread in his absence, I would exert a proper fortitude on the occasion, and support myself for the sake of the man who hoped to call me his, and whose whole felicity depended on me.* He lamented his being obliged to part from me at such a time!—and added, *he was so presumptuous as to be very impatient to introduce Lord Osmond to the Lady whom he expected very shortly to be connected with by the dearest of all ties; therefore begged I would permit him to seize some early day for bringing his friend to Sommerville-House.* I told Sir Charles, *he was an encroacher; that in my opinion he had no reason to believe himself on so sure a foot, till I had heard from Lord Clermont; and that I thought him to blame in touching on such a subject at a moment when my whole attention must be wholly engrossed by one melancholy circumstance.*

“You hurt me much, Lady Louisa!” replied he—“*Not on a sure foot!*—Sir George Sommerville’s approbation is obtained—your brother’s I had before I parted from him.—Good God!—how cruel you are!—But I will not be answered in this way—Before I leave this place, those lips must pronounce me secure of *this hand*;—it shall be mine—you shall not quit me, upon my soul, till you promise that it shall—Speak, my Louisa, will you not consent to bless me with it? “To be thus compelled, Sir Charles”——“No, Madam!——Great as I hold the value of it, I would not owe it to compulsion—Make it a voluntary gift—and I am unexceptionally the happiest of men.” “Well, Sir,” cried I, “it is yours, and with it a heart that shall be all sollici-

tude to make it deserving of you."—I think it is ridiculous to describe a lover's rapture on such occasions. A likeness, no doubt, runs through all; and, if they do not *really* feel what they would have us believe they do, they have brought art to resemble nature so strongly, that there is no perceiving the difference. He told me, *that in a few days I must expect to see him here again, and in the mean while hoped I would not refuse him the satisfaction of my correspondence.* "I cannot longer," said he, "delay going up to Osmond.—He is not so agreeably situated in some points as I could wish; and must be anxious for at least the consolation of a friend—else, how could I prevail on myself to leave my Louisa!"

Sir Charles bid us adieu when we retired. He means to set off very early to-morrow morning. Heaven grant my uncle a good night's repose!—Before I conclude, I must mention our worthy friends, Lord and Lady Arne—Their kindness to me has been as unwearied as it was great. They will not be prevailed on to stay longer than Wednesday. From hence they go up to London for a few weeks.—You will see them, my Julia, and repeat to them the grateful sense I have of their goodness. No words can tell you properly how much I regard them.

I have scribbled this half hour: it is past one o'clock, and yet no heaviness approaches my eyes.—*Malgré* I will bid you farewell, and implore the benevolence of the sleepy god.

Yours ever,

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

WHAT I suffered for you, my Louisa, on receiving your last letter from Southampton, is easier conceived

conceived than described :—one of your quick sensibility is a sad object to meet with such dreadful alarms !—I am to thank you for so soon dispelling my fears on your uncle's account. Few women, distressed on one side by the dangerous illness of a beloved parent, (such have you ever found Sir George,) and engrossed on the other by a lover that is *more* than charming, would have bestowed half an hour to relieve the anxious mind of *even* a friend : but *you* are an exception to most of the sex—therefore I am not surprised ; and with that sentence I conclude my encomiums.

Though Sir Charles has been in town six days, I have not yet beheld him. How unlucky ! He called here yesterday morning, and Lord Osmond with him. My mother and Almeria saw them. I had gone with Lady Percival and my brother to ride out, and was doubly mortified when I heard what a pleasure I had lost. Lady Pemberton and my sister join the multitude in admiring my Lord ; they say, *he is captivating, -but they will not raise my expectations too high !*—I must tell you a circumstance that surprised them—yet remember you are not to repeat it to Sir Charles. My mother was alone in the little drawing room when they were announced. Soon after, Almeria came in, and on her entrance Lord Osmond turned very pale : when she spoke, he seemed in the greatest confusion, and forgot himself so far as to exclaim, “ My God ! Montague, can it be ! ”—Sir Charles upon this approached him, and enquired *if he was ill ?*—Lady Pemberton and my sister were alarmed—but he soon recovered himself, made many apologies *for the consternation he caused, and ascribed it to a vertigo in his head, to which he had been subject, since he was so violently tossed for many hours in the vessel that brought him from Calais.* He ridiculed it amazingly, and diverted them and himself at his own expense in the most agreeable manner ; in spite of which my mother declares his indisposition seemed more the effect of astonishment than a

constitutional failing. She asked Almeria *if she had ever seen my Lord before?* Not to her knowledge, she replied. (Louisa, I hope there is no spice of madness in my Lord's disposition!) After a visit of little less than an hour they made their *baisemains*. Sir Charles returns to Sommerville-House to-morrow—I wish I could see him before he goes!—but he is so taken up with this Osmond!—Would to Heaven he were again in Italy! It is well Sir Charles is not my lover; or it would mortify me to think how much he will be monopolized by him.

Next Monday we are to go to a masquerade at Carlisle-House. I shall not tell you what our dresses will be. Pray prevail on Sir Charles to come up to London time enough to go with us. If he is in our train, none of the party will have any occasion, you know, to dread the artifices of a *Sir Hargrave Pollexfen*; therefore, in pity to us *defenceless damsels*, let us have a Sir Charles of the group.

May my next letter from Sommerville-House give me the pleasing intelligence of Sir George that I desire! and may every good angel have my Louisa in their keeping! prays her

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Sommerville-House.

REJOICE with me, my amiable Julia, that Sir George is much better! Dr. J—— has left us, and repeated again to me, just before his departure, that my uncle is yet at some distance from setting out on that dreadful journey which we all soon or late must undertake.

This morning Sir George told me, he was ready to enter upon the conversation he hinted at to me the first night of my arrival; and, previous to it, put into my hands Sir Charles Montague's letter to him

him from Southampton. I need not describe to you the flattering manner in which he speaks of your Louisa.—Lady Sommerville came in; but seeing us engaged, offered to withdraw. I took her hand, and begged *she would allow me to think her interested in what concerned me;—I besought her to attend to the subject of our discourse.* Sir George nodded to her to stay; and she, with much satisfaction in her countenance, seated herself. Thus he began:

“It would be very needless for me, Louisa, to expatiate on the advantages that must attend your connection with Montague:—you know the high opinion I have of him, and how much I love him; therefore, must conclude that the day which will give you to him, I shall mark as one of the happiest of my life!—But I must demand one question—How are you circumstanced in regard of Mr. Melmoth? Answer with your usual sincerity.”

I told him, *that no engagement subsisted between Mr. Melmoth and me:—that for a time my girlish vanity was flattered by the distinction he shewed me, and I imagined myself bound in gratitude to think favourably of him, which I construed into love; but when the addition of eighteen months passed over my head, and gave greater force to my reason, I was shocked at the choice I had made, and was wretched till I had revoked every encouragement I had given that gentleman. I assured my uncle, that he was made acquainted with my resolution of never becoming his, and had yielded to my entreaties of troubling me no more with his addresses.* He replied, “In that point only you have erred,—the affair was kept a secret from me”—“And from me too,” cried Lady Sommerville, “or I should have advised”—“You rightly judged,” said Sir George, interrupting her, “it never would have met with my approbation:—but still my senses could not be confined, tho’ your sentiments were—I heard and saw enough to wound my peace;—yet, finding you determined to place no confidence in me, I resolved not to extort it from you. I knew full well

the danger that would attend throwing a constraint on a young lady's inclinations—We are all perverse, more or less—Yours was a romantic age, and, if I had made use of any authority on the occasion, I should have been thought tyrannical; which would have been the inevitable means of heightening Mr. Melmoth in your opinion, and so of converting what was perhaps only a temporary liking into a lasting passion.—Thus did I argue with myself; and, tho' I saw you in danger, concluded it best to leave you to the workings of your reason, which I trusted would discover your error sooner, and plainer, than any other method I could strike on.—Thank Heaven, it has answered! and I will never again mention a subject so disagreeable to us both, but to add, that, had I been disappointed in my expectations of you, and you had absolutely fixed your affections on so unworthy an object, I should then have acted my part, and hindered you from throwing yourself away. My mortal displeasure would have attended your marrying him—this should have been told you: and I am sure my Louisa could never have borne that calamity; therefore, would not have brought it upon herself.

Upon the death of my first wife, having lost my poor boy and girl, I determined to substitute you and your brother, my children, in their stead. I settled the greatest part of my estate in Hampshire on Clermont, and put it out of my own power to take it from him. I also made my will, and left you twenty thousand pounds, meaning on the day of your marriage to give your husband twenty thousand, exclusive of my legacy. If I lived not to see that desirable event, you were to have been, at the age of twenty-one, mistress of forty thousand pounds. After thus providing for both, I thought myself entitled to marry; therefore, offered my hand to Miss Meadows, which she did me the honour of receiving. Had heaven blessed us with an offspring, my fortune would have been enough, after the deductions

ductions made out of it (that I have mentioned), to satisfy their ambition. It has not; and your brother will be master of what I possess, which, added to his own estate, will bring him in fourteen thousand a year, besides the twelve hundred per annum which he will pay Lady Sommerville during her life. I have done nothing further for you, Louisa, than I did on the eve of my marriage. I leave it to Clermont, to make any addition he will think proper to your forty thousand pounds.

And now, my amiable girl, that we have finished with money-matters, we will return to a subject more interesting. Let me advise you to weigh well the step you are going to take. Partial as I am to Montague, I wish you not to marry him, unless you do it with every impulse of affection: though I hold him the worthiest of his sex, *you* may not view him in the same prejudiced light;—if so, act an honourable part, and say so at once.”

I knew not at first how to answer my uncle; the contending passions of gratitude, apprehension (lest he thought me still attached to Mr. Melmoth), and love, were at war in my breast, and almost convulsed me. Sir George rung for a glass of water—before it came, I was relieved by a shower of tears; which when Lady Sommerville perceived, she exclaimed to her husband, “This agony of grief bodes Sir Charles no good! Lady Louisa must certainly be attached to some one else!—it is best to own it at once—it will put an end to the affair, and there will be no harm done. I confess it appears not altogether feasible, that another should so soon supply Mr. Melmoth’s place in her affections! Urge Montague’s suit no further, Sir George”—My uncle gave her one of his stern looks, which never fails to silence her; and which, to say a truth, she very often requires. I turned to Lady Sommerville—“Why will you be so cruel, Madam?—What have I ever done, to merit a suspicion of my using duplicity in a case wherein my whole happiness is con-

cerned?—I love no one else,—Sir Charles Montague is dearer to my heart than all the world!—yes, my uncle, dearer than *you* are,—dearer than Julia Herbert is!—Can I say more to evince my attachment to him, since I love not myself so well as I love you both?—These tears flow from gratitude;—I glory in them! they shew you the feelings of my heart, which no words can do justice to.”—Lady Sommerville reddened her lip, by biting it unmercifully;—and looked as if she would say, were my uncle not by “Fine heroics!” He was affected. I told him, *I had absolutely accepted of Sir Charles’s proposals, to whom I made no secret of my affection.* When I related the manner in which I spoke to him the night before he left this place, Lady Sommerville opened her eyes, and assumed a countenance of perfect astonishment. Dear Julia, how she vexed me during the whole conversation! Sir George applauded me, and told me, *that, since the sentiments I expressed for Montague, were the real dictates of my heart, his joy fell very little short of what Sir Charles’s must be, at the prospect of our union.* He seemed fatigued, and I retired to my dressing-room, where I have remained writing ever since.

* * * * *

Thursday, Two o’Clock.

Is it possible, my Julia, that you can have patience with my continuing so long the inexhaustible subject of my passion for Sir Charles? I was just ready to inform you how happy I was made yesterday by a letter from him, when that reflection occurred:—but indeed, dear girl, if I must not write of him, I cannot write at all. Bear with my weakness, and be assured, that, when you have bestowed your heart upon some worthy object (and a superlatively happy one he will be), I shall encourage you to *pour forth* your admiration of him—to tell me twenty times in a minute, *that you love him beyond expression.* Never can I forget the transport my heart feels *now*, at being

ing allowed the same privileges.—Bless me!—whom have we here? An elegant phaeton and four, with three attendants, are flying up the avenue; their appearance bespeaks something great. The carriage approaches—it wheels round the ring—a single O is cyphered under a coronet.—If my eyes do not deceive me, or my palpitating heart flatter, Sir Charles Montague is one of the gentlemen.—It is he, my Julia! and with him Lord Osmond—Now for a sight of this Adonis!—I am summoned—

Thursday Night, Twelve o'Clock.

Well, my fair friend! I have seen this irresistible man. “And what sort of a creature is he?—does he answer your expectation?—I dare believe not, —though perhaps he exceeds it!”——I fancy, Julia, there is as great a share of curiosity in your composition, as you suspected there was of parsimony in my Lord’s.—I am afraid of frightening you with this similitude of Vulcan. He was, I think, the ugliest and most deformed of the Heathen mythology; and yet he fell to the lot of a Venus.—The Lord preserve you from Osmond?—I see surprize painted in your face.—Suppose I now represent an object exactly opposite to the hideous God!—the contrast will but do him justice.—Yet what a task am I about to undertake! A pen like mine must fail extremely in an attempt to draw so enchanting a form as my Lord Osmond’s. To please you, I will try for it.

First, let me tell you, he is tall, and the most elegant figure I ever beheld. I had no idea of a handsome leg and foot, I find, till I saw Osmond’s. His eyes are very large, black, and penetrating; yet they speak the softest language in the world—so expressive!—Ah Julia! what cannot they express to a beloved object: You are not easily caught by beauty, but with a heart disengaged, if you withstand the eyes of Osmond, you are “more or less than

than *woman*."—His nose is rather inclining to an aquiline, just enough to give him a very sensible look. His mouth—mercy on me! how shall I describe it! Indeed, Julia, I cannot possibly do it: I will only say that it surpasses his other features, which, but for the comparison, would appear perfect. The redness of his lips sets off the beautiful whiteness of his teeth. The lily and rose are blended in his complexion, without giving him any effeminate look;—on the contrary, he has a fine manly appearance. His hair is dark, and extremely thick. His address is the most finished you can imagine. He does not stir, but a thousand graces play about him. You will be astonished when I say, that Sir Charles Montague appeared *nothing*—nay, almost awkward, when near Lord Osmond; so totally was he eclipsed by his friend's superior brightness.

From the portrait I have drawn, and the truth I have *just* allowed to fall from my pen, do you not fear my stability in Montague's favour? You need not, dear Julia! It is true, I viewed Lord Osmond with admiration;—but then it was only an admiration that I should feel at seeing a well-executed piece of painting. My heart at the very moment was wholly Montague's, and to have been forced to change Sir Charles even for Osmond, would have been considered by me as the bitterest stroke that fortune could inflict.

You have often told me, that I am a true physiognomist; if so, I read in Lord Osmond's countenance a settled melancholy—yet let me not arrogate too much merit to myself from this penetration: perhaps I never should have made the observation, if Sir Charles had not told me that *his situation is not a happy one*. Good Heaven! what can render it otherwise? His very looks must command his wishes: I dare answer his heart never formed one, that was not dictated by virtue and reason. None but the soul

of

of a tyger or tygreſs could have inflicted misfortunes on him. On my entering the room, Sir Charles preſented him to me *as the dear Oſmond of whom I had ſo often heard him ſpeak*. He then turned to him, and ſpoke in a complimentary manner of me. My Lord bowed to your Louiſa, and ſaid ſome very gallant things. I made the beſt return I could. My aſtoniſhment at ſeeing ſo ſuperlatively handſome a creature almoſt deprived me of utterance. We talked much of Paris and of Italy. His converſation is ſenſible, and naturally inclined to be very lively I am ſure, was not his vivacity damped by the diſtreſs “his heart wrings at.” My harpſichord lay open. Sir Charles asked, if I had been practiſing? I ſaid no, “Oſmond,” cried he, “is an admirer of, as well as a very great proſicient in, muſic; will your Ladyſhip oblige him with your favourite air out of *Armida*?” My Lord ſeconded his requeſt ſtrenuouſly; and I went to the harpſichord. He ſeemed to feel the tender ſentiments I ſung, for he ſighed once or twice. I fancy, Julia, Lady Henrietta Marchmont is not the *principal* object of his affections. I think it more probable, that he ſhould be attached to ſome Italian Lady. He once touched the keys after I had diſcontinued from playing;—juſt ſounded a dozen notes, and deſiſted. I begged him to go on. He entreated my excuſe, and I forbore to urge him, leſt it ſhould be diſagreeable. Had I repeated the requeſt a ſecond time, his politeneſs would not have allowed him to reſuſe me.

Very ſoon after, my Lord took his leave: he pleaded, as an apology to Sir George, for his not ſtaying to dinner, an engagement he was under to be at Sir Harry Bellingley's this night; and added, *that he had been ſo happy, (looking at his watch,) that he had ſtolen more time than he had allotted, in paying his devoirs at Sommerville-Houſe*. He goes up to London the day after to-morrow. Sir Charles remains

remains with us a fortnight—every moment shews him to more advantage in the eyes of

Your

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

St. James's-Square.

HOW can I compose my spirits enough to tell you that I again live!—Oh, Montague! sympathize in my joy.---The last happy six hours shall be for ever held auspicious.---Thou trembling pen! be less agitated, and inform my Charles---this long lost, heavenly fair one is---found.---My transported heart will let me say no more!

* * * * *

Tuesday Morning, 10 o'clock.

I have been in bed two hours, but not a wink of sleep approached my eyes.---Such excess of joy is hardly to be supported.

“Bliss goes but to a certain bound;

Beyond 'tis agony.”

I will try to calm my spirits by a recital of what has happened since yesterday morning.

I delivered your message to Frederick Montague, and we both went on your various commissions, which employed us till it was time to dress. At the half-hour after four we met at Bingley's; where we found Rainsford, Seymour, and Meadows. Champagne

pagne and Burgundy so freely circulated, that each man was inspired with a gaiety of heart that made him speak his sentiments. When libations are offered to Bacchus, the Cyprian Queen is generally present at the sacrifice. We made love our topick, and named many objects that might rival the daughter of Jove in beauty. Seymour spoke like an enthusiast, and plainly demonstrated, he best could paint the passion, who was under its immediate influence. No words could do justice to my feelings on such a subject; therefore I said but little. My silence was construed into an indifference for the sex---I vindicated myself, and *assured them that I did not deserve so cruel an aspersion.*

"No, by Heaven!" cried Rainsford;---"but to *you*, all women have been such easy conquests, that you foresee no trouble in securing the most charming." I answered, *he was mistaken.*---With a fixed smile, which bordered on a sneer, he continued his satire:

"Amorous and yielding as you found the girls on the continent, you may discover a little difficulty, Osmond, in prevailing on those that are here to listen to you: they are not of such combustible textures in England as in a warmer climate."

"There," replied I, you certainly are in an error. It is true I have not resided in this country for some years, yet I well know the women of it have given no strong proofs in general of an impenetrable virtue, notwithstanding your high opinion of them,---which indeed may be founded on ill success."

He grew warm, and I, perceiving him heated with wine, let drop the argument. Meadows asked, *if I had seen Pemberton's sisters?* and immediately launched into rapturous eulogiums on their beauty: nor was Lady Lonisa Sydney forgotten; each man envied you.—About ten o'clock we parted, and I came home to put on a dress that would make me fit to join the motley crew in Soho-Square. Before

fore I had completed my disguise, Montague entered, equipped for the same place, and proposed our calling in Grosvenor's-Square for a quarter of an hour. I agreed, and we went to Lady D——'s, where a crowd of masks were assembled. About one we entered Carlisle-House, and there by consent separated. In little more than an hour I was pretty well tired of the nonsense I spoke, and that was addressed to me, to keep up the *spirit of the thing*; and meditated making my retreat. I was descending the stairs with that intent, when Belfield and Frederick Montague met me with their masks off.—I informed them that I was going; they wondered at it, saying they never saw more brilliant company than were then afforded.—I pleaded fatigue—Belfield declared such an excuse inadmissible, and desired me to use my diligence in helping him to discover Lady Julia Herbert.

“You may imagine how clever a Mercury you employ,” replied I: “I never saw her in my life!” “*Never saw her!*” repeated the Count, with a look of the utmost astonishment.—“In England so long, and not to have beheld that wonder of the creation!” and he turned from me with a look of contempt. I joined Frederick in laughing at him, but he would take no further notice of me, and I pursued my way. Montague thoughtlessly called after me, “You had best return, Osmond!” It made me known to several, amongst whom was Rainsford. He came up to me, and laid hold of my arm. He could not disguise his voice, though his face was hid.

“Well, Osmond,” cried he, “Is there not an assemblage here of as handsome women as any in Italy?”

“Faith, my Lord,” returned I, “I have given myself no trouble to draw comparisons: I leave that for one of your nice judgment to do.”

“What!—you are prejudiced against them, because they have yet paid no adulation to your fine person!”

son!—They have not as much taste here as at Milan.—Let me tell you, my Lord, the Lady who signalized you with so great a preference—who kept you so long abroad—your Violantè—handsome as I once thought her—is but a foil to”——

“From my *long stay abroad* your Lordship may forget my character; else you would know, that I never fail to resent any language that borders upon impertinence. I am ignorant what right you have to mark me as an object that will put up with it—I am equally ignorant of the right you have to penetrate into my motives for staying at any place.”

“You speak in a very high manner, Osmond!”

“You deserve that *I should do so*, my Lord.”

“No—by no means—I meant not to offend, and beg your pardon, if I have been so unfortunate.”

“Dear Rainsford, what a reproach to my warmth!—I must entreat forgiveness so, supposing it your intention.”

He insisted on my staying half an hour longer. After this little *fracas* I would not refuse him; so we went together into the cotillon-room very good friends.—Rainsford is disagreeable when the least inebriated, and, after his sarcasm at Bingley’s, I could not so readily pass by his assured manner of speaking, as I perhaps ought to have done.—He owes me a spite for happening to be more in Violantè’s good graces than he was, soon after we met at Milan. However, after a little exertion of spirit, I found him docile and pleasant enough.

On entering the cotillon-room, I beheld an inexpressibly elegant form, dressed as a pilgrim. I was instantly struck with a notion that it was the very identical one I had met at the Convent of——in Paris. I went up and spoke to her. Her voice confirmed my suspicions. I never quitted her, but could not make any discovery of her face, or who she was, tho’ I invoked her in the words of Shakespeare’s Ferdinand,

“I do

"I do beseech you,
(Chiefly that I might set it in my prayers,)
What is your name?"

I asked her to dance. She consented. 'Heavens! what grace did she display! I told her, *I would give millions to see her face.*

"That I will endeavour to prevent," replied she, "lest it should deprive me of the conquest *you say* my figure has made." I assured her, *she was no stranger to me.*

"Very probably," she answered; "but to say the truth, I never saw you before—at least to my knowledge.—Who are you, pray?—My curiosity is excited." "And can you, Madam," cried I, "have so little conscience as to ask my name, after this minute declaring you will endeavour to conceal yourself from me?—You desire to know me that you may the more effectually do it.—Come, come, I positively must be gratified in beholding the lovely features which that mask hides!"

"Indeed, Sir, you have a very false idea of my countenance. My portion of vanity is moderate; it bids me not destroy the favourable impression I have been lucky enough to make under this piece of silk.—But where did you ever see me before?" "In Paris." "Aye! I thought you were mistaken;" and she turned to leave me.

"Indeed I am not;—my imagination has continually dwelt on this celestial image since I gazed with rapture on it in the convent of—— at Paris. Do you forget your amiable friend the Princesse de——?"—"Good God! who are you?" I withdrew my mask, "Have you never seen any resemblance to this face before?" "Never—but I am sure you are my Lord Osmond!"

"And who are you, you angelic creature?—Keep me no longer in suspense—I came over with an intention of finding you out.—Had not success crowned my wishes, I must have died of despair.—

This

This meeting is propitious!—By Heaven I will not lose the advantage of it, nor quit you till”——

“Lady Henrietta Marchmont comes to free me from the gallantry of her captive—Ha ha ha!”

“What have I to do with Lady Henrietta?—No, listen to the vows I breath on this celestial hand, never to love another.”——“My Lord, you forget you have not seen my face—and this hand I must withdraw.” “Not till you tell me who you are.” “I am of character and family, my Lord, and, as such, I am sure you will consider the delicacy due to me.”

“When I forget it, Madam, to any of your adorable sex, but more especially to you, may I be abandoned by you!—the greatest curse that can fall on me.”—I resigned her hand, as she grew uneasy; but, whilst I was in possession of it, what tumultuous throbs of joy agitated my soul! Montague, can the libertine’s most sensual gratification yield the hundredth part of enjoyment that is afforded us by the slightest favour from the virtuous object of our love?—Ah! that some of our friends, who are plunged in vice, could draw the comparison! Libertinism in their breasts would exist no longer.

I again entreated my fair pilgrim to dance. She whispered a lady in a domino, on whose arm she constantly leaned; and, when she had received her answer, a second time blessed me with her hand. After we had finished, a gentleman came to her, and engaged her for the next cotillon.—How I envied him, when I heard her consent to his request!—As she was preparing for the dance, a person (that I was not unacquainted with, tho’ I could not recollect his name, nor where I had seen him) in a lilac domino told her, *she must find it very inconvenient from the heat to dance with a mask on.* She replied, *she did not mind it.* He uttered some further objection, which the lady I mentioned joined in—and she immediately dropped the envious covering

ing which had hindered a multitude from feasting their sight on the

———“most replenished sweet
Work of Nature which from the
Prime Creation e’er she framed.”

Ah, Montague! what were my emotions at viewing the very face I saw at Paris! I gazed with rapture on her, and for some minutes could not speak. She looked at me with a blush, and exclaimed,

“Henceforward, my Lord, be more cautious how you raise your expectations.”

She flew with Colonel Cecil (for he was the happy man), and I stood as near as possible, adoring *even* the ground she beat with her pretty, well-managed feet. The dance being done, I attended her back to her party. I found them all unmasked, and that the lady in the domino was Lady Pemberton, who directly introduced me to Lord Pemberton, and afterwards presented this lovely girl, who has been so long a foe to my rest—whose name I have hitherto thought of with a prejudice bordering on disgust—whom I have vowed to search every corner of the globe for—this admirable Lady did she present to me under the title of *Lady Julia Herbert*.

——— And now, Montague, I cannot in reason but allow you to laugh at my absurdities respecting this first of women.—My heart is so dilated with extacy, that I could follow your example.

Under masks there was nothing extraordinary in the declaration I had made Lady Julia. It might pass as a masquerade conversation;—but the disguise once removed, I dared not continue to address her in the same style, though she must have plainly seen my heart wished to be allowed such happiness. Our acquaintance was too short certainly for it to be proper. I asked Lady Almeria to dance. She is too much like her sister not to be a lovely object. They were both habited exactly the same, and appeared divinities, though in terrestrial characters.

Belfield

Belfielde joined us, and seemed consumedly in love!

Lady Henrietta Marchmont and her aunt came up to Lady Pemberton and her charming daughter as I was standing by the latter. Lady Julia looked at me and smiled—I took no further notice of the ladies than to bow to them. Rainsford and Frederick rallied me on *changing my mind*, and congratulated me on *finding my relish for the masquerade return so surprisngly*. Belfielde asked me *how I approved of his choice?* and *whether I did not think she would eclipse all the beauties of the French court when he carried her over?*—What an opiniated puppy! I hate the blockhead for his presumption.

When Lady Pemberton gave the word to depart, and was informed her carriage waited, as I was next to Lady Julia I offered her my hand. Seymour endeavoured to anticipate me: I shewed him the prize I had obtained, and bowed. He drew a sigh and retreated. I was not so lost in my own happiness as not to feel his disappointment.—I was vain enough to hope that I might discover some approbation in Lady Julia's countenance. My aspiring impertinence was punished;—she behaved with an equal affability to all, that mortified me, tho' I admired her prudence the more for it. She must have perceived the conquest she had made, and most girls would have shewn a sort of joyful levity, very flattering to a man's expectation. Here it was different.—But Lady Julia Herbert is too well accustomed to captivate, to view it in any other light than a thing of course, which must happen when such transcendent beauty appears.

Lord Pemberton *hoped I was informed that he had left his name at my door*.—I will immediately dress, wait upon the Duke of Westmoreland, whom I have not seen these five days; and if I can get away from him in any tolerable time, will pay my respects in Portman-Square—If not this morning, the evening must be allotted to that purpose; for my heart
pant

pants with impatience once more to behold my Julia.—Ah, Montague! what an extatic thought! May she be mine!—Unite with me in praying for the realization of it, and I shall be the happiest of men.

Kiss Lady Louisa's hand for

Your faithful

OSMOND.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

IN spite of your assertions to the contrary, I cannot help thinking your description of "Henry, Marquis of Osmond," has in it an air of rapture very dangerous to the peace of Sir Charles Montague.—You may be angry, Louisa, but I declare it as my opinion, that, if you mean to act honourably, you ought to keep up no further acquaintance with this *blazing comet*, who came over with no other intention, I actually believe, than to destroy the hearts of all the English women.

I have seen my Lord—Yes, he is certainly handsome—I allow it—but he is yet more agreeable—Such vivacity,—such brilliancy of wit,—such delicacy in his conversation to our sex,—such an address,—such!—in short, Louisa, I am determined to follow the advice I give you, and see him no more.—Prepared as I was by your prognostications, how could I do otherwise than be charmed! You half persuaded me into a passion for Lord Osmond before I beheld him—cruel girl!—yet you knew him to be engaged.

Well, my Louisa, to leave this nonsensical stile, I do think Sir Charles's friend, *sans badinè*, comes up to your description: he is a most delightful object,—but surely not so infallible a one at captivating as you

you imagine. My curiosity has been fully gratified since I received your letter. Last Monday I was introduced to Lord Osmond at the masquerade. I danced with him once or twice in the course of the night. Before we unmasked, I happened to fall in his way, and he accosted me with the gallantry (adapted to the place) of a French-man. He was habited as a Mercury: I never saw so becoming a dress, or one so well calculated to shew to perfection his elegant form—but indeed such a person must adorn any garb; and the tinsel and feathers he appeared in on Monday borrowed the greatest part of their lustre from the beauty of the wearer. In doing justice to the handsome Henry, you are not to cast a sarcastic smile on this paragraph, Louisa. . . . I can admire charms, as well in man as woman, without being in love. I think I shall never fall a victim to that passion.

Yesterday evening Lord Osmond came to Portman-Square. We had company; a good part of which surrounded the card-tables, whilst others were engaged in little parties. Lady Mortimer, Miss Edgcumb, Sir James Westbrook, and myself, had formed one at the lower end of the room. We were repeating over the occurrences of the masquerade. Lord Osmond *strolled* towards us, and took a seat next to me: he was in admirable spirits, and gave life to the conversation. An hour and a half flew away before we imagined the third part of the time was elapsed; and it was with infinite reluctance we saw him steal out of the room.

But, dear Louisa, where is the melancholy you see depicted in his countenance? I see none of it. But I am not the physiognomist you are: and I am glad of it in this case; for, though a stranger to me, I should be grieved to behold so amiable a man a prey to wretchedness. I jested with him (under a mask, observe) about Lady Henrietta: he denied his being a lover of hers. So honest a countenance to conceal so much artifice! Fie, my Lord!—

Sophia

Sophia Neville arrived in town this evening: she spends the next fortnight with us, during my uncle's tour into Devonshire. Judge how happy my Lord Pemberton is!

The day after to-morrow we are all to go down to Lord Mortimer's seat at Windsor, where we shall stay four days. A hundred beaux are to be of the party; Lord Osmond will be one of them. Every day is to be spent in a diversity of amusements. —Oh that you were Lady Louisa Montague! Until you are, we shall never have you amongst us. For my sake, be expeditious in changing your name:—you know not with what impatience I wait for the moment that will give you once more to

JULIA HERBERT.

I heard a week ago that Colonel Elliot had embarked: may Heaven protect him! Commend me properly to Sir Charles.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Windsor.

I AM, by an invitation from Mortimer, at this place, with his family and Lady Pemberton's, in which I include Lady Sophia Neville: the rest of the lovely sex are too numerous to particularize. The men consist of nine or ten of your most intimate friends, that belong to our club.

You can form no idea of the happiness I enjoy in the sweet Julia's company. How complete would it be rendered could I but hope for the slightest partiality from her in my favour! But, alas! Montague, I see not the remotest appearance of it; nor is there the least difference in her behaviour to me and to Budenall, Frederick Montague, and Seymour, who live each of them on her smiles. I might have added Westbrook to the list, who adores her, and

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and shews it most by the pains he is at to conceal it. Yet surely their passions for her are not to be compared to mine! But how unreasonable an animal I am! Is it not a greater felicity than I once hoped for, to gaze on her,—to converse,—to ride,—and dance with her? Assuredly it is; and the same benevolent genius that led me to a discovery of the object of my wishes, may yet guide me to the possession of her. In that dear hope I will give myself up to my present bliss, nor suffer another fear to taint the joys which gild the few days that are spent at Windsor.

Can you, my Charles, account for the inconsistency of my heart, which, though it loves to distraction, will not permit my tongue, in any of the favourable opportunities that offer, to tell its feelings to Lady Julia? Yet, on reflection, I find the cause: there is a divinity about her, which inspires a reverential awe, and brings constantly to my sense the idea that no man is worthy of her. — And again—should I be rejected—Oh horrible! horrible!—To be divested of hope—distraction must follow. — Farewel!

Yours ever,

OSMOND.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

WE returned this morning from Lord Mortimer's, delighted with our excursion. Where a vast deal of pleasure is looked for before-hand, in parties of this sort, (as you observed in a former letter,) people generally come back disappointed. Our expectations on this occasion were greatly raised, and fully answered. Every person's endeavour was exerted to render the time agreeable. The ladies

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were

146 MASQUERADES; OR,

were constantly dressed in smiles: the gentlemen were *gallant* and assiduous, and strove to deserve them. We danced, rode, viewed the castle and adjacent seats;—in short, not a single minute hung heavy on any of us.

Lady Mortimer seems determined to inspire us all with her gaiety. She has formed parties for every day and evening during a fortnight, and means to conclude the round of dissipation by giving a grand ball. Almeria (who is exactly on her model) is in raptures. Thank Heaven, as yet this racketting life seems to agree with Lady Pemberton! I never saw her look better. But my stupid disposition hinders me from enjoying it to so high a degree as others do. I already feel tired to death, and know not how I am to manage to keep pace with them in the *whirl* I am drawn into: and yet the four last days will appear *days of rest* to those I am to encounter.

I am now dressed for the opera, and hear a summons to quit my pen. Do not, dear Louisa, expect me to write again till my senses are a little composed.—I must inform you that Lord Bude-nall has done me the honour of offering me his hand, which, you may suppose, I rejected, but with all the delicacy I could assume proper for the occasion.—I come, dear Caroline; and am, my Louisa, your

JULIA HERBERT.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

Windsor.

WAS Lady Louisa out of the question, dear Montague, I should murmur most vehemently at your changing your plan of coming up to town about this time; but, as *she* is the object who detains you, I cannot find in my soul to complain, though

though I never wished more for your presence than I do now. However, I must (as you tell me) be contented to let another three weeks pass over ere I can see you;—but I cannot avoid hoping that you may not lengthen your stay in the country beyond that period.

Pemberton and I are become very intimate. I find him what report speaks him, amiable, sensible, and elegant;—but there is a *trait* in his character that particularly attracts my admiration and esteem: it is, an exquisite delicacy of feeling and sentiment, which on every occasion shines forth in the most exalted light. In a few weeks hence he presents his cousin to the world as Lady Pemberton. I cannot tell how I sigh when I behold the happiness he enjoys with his Sophia!—You must judge what my reflections are at such times!—Were you not, dear Charles, an *amator*, I should fear that my pen persecutes you with dwelling for ever on my Julia;—but you are under the dominion of the same passion that agitates my soul, though the objects are different; and sympathy will teach you to feel my situation, and be rather pleased than otherwise with the inexhaustible theme.

Yesterday Lady Mortimer and the two Lady Herbert's were riding in the Park, which was very full, when Frederick Montague and I met and joined them. We had not proceeded a hundred yards before an impertinent scoundrel, on a sudden, rushed with amazing rapidity by Lady Julia's horse, with a view of alarming her. His vile intention succeeded. She was on a beautiful creature of her brother's that she alway chuses to ride, which having a good deal of spirit, and finding himself curbed from getting into a race, pranced and reared so violently, that, with all her skill, she could not keep her seat, and I dismounted but just time enough to catch her in my arms from being thrown to the ground: she was near fainting: a crowd assembled, which added to her distress; and

it was with difficulty I could support her, trembling, to Lady Mortimer's coach, that waited at the bar. After putting the ladies in, Frederick and I went in pursuit of the rascal, who was making off at seeing us return; but I overtook him, and gave him the chastisement he so richly deserved. He called himself a gentleman, and swore he would have satisfaction. I believed not a syllable of the former assertion, from his behaviour to a woman; and, as to the latter, was in some perplexity to know how that could be brought about, as, in my opinion, nothing could satisfy a man who had submitted to the contamination of the cane or whip: however, I ordered my groom to tell him who I was, and where to be found, which he did in my hearing. After this I went to Portman-Square, and there was informed that Lady Julia was greatly indisposed from the terror she had endured. I was quite confused at the profusion of acknowledgements Lord and Lady Pemberton poured upon me, and was about to fly from them, when the heavenly girl came down to add her thanks to theirs. *She hoped I received no hurt in extricating her from so dangerous a fall as her's must have proved, but for my humane assistance.* The beautiful language which overspread her face,—the melting accents of her voice,—transported my soul to extacy!—I could not forbear to snatch her hand to my lips;—nor was she displeased at my temerity:—the roses, indeed, flew back for a minute to her cheeks, and then quit- ted again their usual habitation. She appeared a real invalid; and I, fearful of intruding, took my leave: however, she is now so much better, that I am in hopes of finding her presently, with her mother, &c. at Drury-lane Play-house.—Adieu! and know me always

Your faithful

OSMOND.

To

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

AN unlucky accident which happened yesterday morning gives me the leisure of an hour to write to my dear Louisa. As I am able to use my pen, you will not be much alarmed when I tell you *that accident* was a fall from my horse. It would inevitably have been fatal, from the manner in which I was thrown, if my Lord Osmond had not, with a miraculous agility, (as they tell me, for, you may believe, I had no senses at the time to observe any thing,) sprung from his horse, and come in time to save me from the fate which awaited me. The fright I was in was the chief inconvenience I felt: indeed, my spirits have been sadly deranged ever since. Mr. A * * * r bled me last night, which has been of service.

I know not, dear Louisa, how to express to you the gratitude my heart is filled with towards Lord Osmond for his kind sollicitude at the moment of my distress, exclusive of what I owe him for my preservation.—Such humanity and tenderness as appeared in his countenance!—So eager to save me from the curiosity of the gathering crowd!—So delicate and respectful in his manner!—I do say with you, indeed, “How happy will that woman be who possesses his affections!” I think I am from hence bound to esteem him with the utmost friendship.

My mother, Lady Mortimer, and Almeria, are gone to the play: I begged to be left at home, pleading that I was not sufficiently recovered to go into public. Lady Pemberton was so good as to hold my excuse admissible, and grant my request.

When do you intend to give your hand to Sir Charles? That event once over, if I do not see you, I shall at least have the pleasure of hearing from you again, I trust:—at present it appears to me as if you were entirely lost to every object but the one you are so soon to call yours. Consider the length

of time which has elapsed since the date of your last letter, and then, blame me, if you can, for this observation.—And yet, how unreasonable I am; not to make allowances for your situation!—Pardon me, my Louisa; I see—and hate myself for my petulancy.

I suppose, after Sir Charles enters the matrimonial list, his friend will very soon follow his example. Blessings attend him!—But indeed, my Louisa, I cannot think Lady Henrietta so adequate a match as he deserves in any respect but fortune; and, surely, that is the meanest of all considerations! Lord Osmond seems not to like her:—but are we not taught to believe that men are compositions of artifice? and is it not natural to conclude that they always dress their thoughts in masquerade? How strange!

I shall be accused of vanity, if two letters running tell you in each of a new lover—I must run the risk:—but ah, Louisa! you know but little of the disposition of my heart, if you suspect *such lovers* can give me an idea of triumph.

The Count de Belfielde has made his addressee to me in form: I need not add that I answered him as I did Lord Budenall—but there is no getting rid of him; he still perseveres to torment me. What absurdity!—as if that would induce me to change my resolution!—I cannot paint to you my chagrin the other night, at the opera, when he anticipated Lord Osmond in leading me to the carriage.

To-morrow my sister gives her ball: I believe it will be very superb. After that, Lady Percival's is to be given; and then my mother follows their lead.—I never was more tired of dissipation than at present. I sigh for a few tranquil hours to recover the serenity of mind which this bustling life has deprived me of.—Good Heaven! what an idle pursuit is that of pleasure! I can safely avow it is not to be found in a crowd of splendid people, nor in the pageantry and mummary of spectacles. I am happy to think that a couple of months will see us in the country;—a change I wish for with impatience.

Would

Would the time were now come!—Ah, my Louisa! how this abominable fall has depressed my spirits!—I will write no more, lest my letter should have the same effect on yours.—I must just add, that my uncle is returned to London, and has taken Sophia home; but she is still in all our parties.

Ever your affectionate

JULIA HERBERT.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Semmerville-House.

AH, my Julia!—my friend!—what a letter have I from you!—First let me repeat my thanks to Heaven for your escape, and again beg eternal rewards on Osmond for his timely protection!—But for him, what a wretch might I be at this moment! My blood stagnates at the idea. And next suffer me to clear myself from the injustice of your unkind suspicion, by informing you that my silence proceeded from a total inability to use a pen. In attempting to open one of the swivels of my watch-chain, I was obliged to use a knife, which slipped and cut my right hand so terribly, that I could neither write nor work till this morning that the surgeon allowed me to do both. Do not be uneasy; for it is no longer of any consequence. I was fearful of alarming you, or you should have been acquainted with the accident soon after it happened.

But what, my Julia, is the matter?—Never did I know in my life more even spirits than yours. “*Dissipation disturb the serenity of your mind!*” Oh! no, no, no!—Some other cause has done that mischief—*Your fall?*—Why it might at the time, and for a few hours after; but it goes against my creed to ascribe so great a change to a temporary shock, attended (Heaven be praised!) by no injury. Can a little terror make you quarrel with amuse-

ments you took delight in a few weeks ago?—Can that account for your being so suddenly fatiated with them as to desire to leave London, and *sigh for the moment that will carry you from it?*—I will not, dear Julia, intrude upon you my conjectures—Let me only beg you will search in your own bosom for the source of this *alarming* perplexity;—and then be as candid as you have ever been in acquainting me with it. I am interrupted——

* * * * *

—Sir Charles—my dear Sir Charles! could not leave me at the expiration of the fortnight: he agreed to bless us three weeks longer with his company. Ten days of the time have already slipped away: at the end of it he will go up to London for a week, to see that every thing is in readiness against he carries to your gay metropolis the happy woman who will call him hers—I have promised to give him my hand at the altar very soon after his return.—Julia, how near the awful moment approaches, in which the name of Sydney will be sunk into that of Montague?—Shall I, think you, always find him the same amiable object that he now appears?—Will not the lordly husband, the despotic ruler, succeed the tender, gentle, insinuating lover?—Unjust surmise!—’Tis profanation to entertain a doubt of my Montague!—As much so as to suspect him of insincerity, or throw a reflection on his fidelity. The happy sunshine that breaks upon my fate has renovated Sir George’s health and spirits: he seeks company; nay, ventures to go out to air in his chaise!—The rest of us (you know we have an excellent neighbourhood) make parties, visit, dance, have concerts, and are antidotes to dulness and chagrin.—But there my pen ran into an egregious mistake. Immersed as *I am* in so much gaiety, a few pangs have found their way to my heart since I received your last letter. Should my Julia be a prey to melancholy, how will my felicity be embittered!

embittered!—*Felicity!*—I cannot know an idea that comes near the word, whilst you are unhappy.—No more on this subject for your sake and my own till I receive your next, which will either dissipate my doubts, or confirm my fears.

Sir Charles commissioned Lord Osmond when he went up to take him a house (which we both like) in Cumberland-Street. The instant he proposed it to me, I approved of it, for its near situation to Portman-Square; and I was not displeased at being informed that it was the house which Lady Caroline Denley and her niece resided in when I was with you in town. The elegance of it, you may remember, we both extolled.

Was Miss Edgcumb with you at Windsor? Poor girl!—This question leads to a topic I am much interested in, Lord Pemberton's marriage. May he and his Sophia experience every bliss that attends the state they are so soon to enter! If my prophetic soul does not err, they will be a very happy couple. I hope we shall meet, dear Julia, before you go into the country---It certainly *must* happen; for I have already been debarred too long of the pleasure I hold most dear upon earth.

Lord Osmond is a constant correspondent of Sir Charles's. I should like to know the subject of his letters—I am sure Lady Henrietta is not—But his friend is very secret, and, you may suppose, I do not even cast a curious look at him, when he speaks of hearing from his Henry.

Last night Sir Charles *again* expressed to me his regret that you are so difficult to please in your choice, and said, *he would give a great deal to know, if there was a man in the world for whom you had a predilection.* His eyes were stedfastly fixed in my face while he spoke. I enquired his motive—He made no other answer, but “Ah, Louisa, I wish”——“What?”——“I must not tell”——“I will be as reserved, Sir Charles.” He was going to reply, when I was called to the quadrille-table. What

can he mean? Surely, Julia, his inquisitiveness must in some measure be on Osmond's account!—— If so, I join him in his "*I wish*"——

The conversation after supper turned on the beauties who adorn our Court. I enquired if Lady Henrietta might be classed amongst them? "No indeed!" answered Col. Bingley. "Is she sensible, Sir Charles?" "Faith I am ignorant of it if she is; but I have a very slight acquaintance with her." "That is astonishing, as she is so soon to be your friend's wife!" *My friend's wife!* Lady Louisa."——He paused——"When she is introduced to me by *that title*, I shall then be privileged to a nearer intimacy, and will inform you."

Sly creature!—What am I to think? Adieu, dearest Julia! Never doubt that you possess half the heart (the other half is Montague's) of your

LOUISA SYDNEY.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

St. James's-Square.

YOU will be sorry to hear of the embarrassed and distressed situation I have been in for many days past. The morning after Lady Pemberton's ball, I drove to my father's, meaning to attend him to Court. At saluting him, I observed a sternness in his aspect that boded me no good. He was very silent; and, when he had finished his toilet, we stepped into his chariot; but, before we left the door, he desired, *if I was not very particularly engaged, I would dismiss my vis-à-vis, and return in his carriage with him to dinner, and consent to spend the evening in the manner he should appoint.* I assented to his first proposal, but declared myself engaged at eight o'clock. I ordered my servants to go home, and return at that hour. We drove off, and, after a short pause, his Grace began with the following enquiry: "Pray, my Lord, may

may I be permitted to ask what is to be done at eight o'clock, that you are then so indispensably obliged to leave me?" "I am engaged, my Lord, to be of Lady Pemberton's party to a private concert, and from thence to attend her to the Festino." "Always in Lady Pemberton's suite!" "Certainly your Grace can find no objection to that;—a woman so universally admired, that it is the greatest advantage a young man can wish for to be admitted to her acquaintance."—"I admire your *enthusiasm* on the subject; but perhaps your sentiments and mine differ on this head. However, you can write an excuse from Grosvenor-Square. You must be of *my party* this evening." "I beg your Grace to consider"———"Well, I will——Since the order of nature is to be reversed,—the son to command, and the parent obey,—I have nothing to do but to submit—Pursue your engagement;—but remember, Harry, that you dine with me again to-morrow, and I expect to have the evening from you." I bowed obedience, happy to have been so well excused; and flattered myself the gathering storm which appeared upon his brow would be dissipated ere fresh matter could arise for further altercation. He did not condescend to speak another syllable to me during the time we were confined together in the chariot. What were my reflections, are best kept to my own bosom: they were not to my father's honour, —nor perhaps to my own credit.

Lord and Lady Pemberton, the two Lady Herbert's, Lord and Lady Mortimer, were at the drawing-room, which was a very full one. I directly joined the Herbert's; and, casting my eyes some minutes after on the Duke, perceived him looking at me with the utmost indignation and passion blended in his countenance. Soon after came in Mrs. Aubrey, and her niece Lady Henrietta Marchmont; the latter so loaded with jewels, that she seemed to totter under their weight, and was a thousand times more conspicuously ugly from their glare. I turned my eyes with horror from this hideous object, and
rewarded

rewarded them for the penance they had undergone, by feasting them on my angel Julia, who appeared infinitely handsomer from such a contrast. She was elegantly dressed, without extravagancy either of fashion or expense; her beauty added charms to, instead of borrowing them from, her attire: every one was fixed in contemplation of her; even my father looked at her with *spiteful* admiration, and, I believe, could with truth have repeated,

—————“ Even I, who hate her,
With a malignant joy behold such beauty,
And, while I curse, desire it.”

However, he with difficulty left gazing on her, and turned his attention to Lady Henrietta, to whom he paid so much respect, that one less in the secret than I am would be convinced he intended her to be my mother, instead of his daughter.

When the drawing-room broke up, and we were seated once more in the chariot, I asked his opinion of Lady Julia and Lady Almeria Herbert.

“ They are very handsome certainly,” he replied. “ It is a pity they have not better fortunes;—but they can scarcely hope to marry men on a foot with themselves in point of family.” “ Good Heaven! why not? Is your Grace *really* in earnest?” “ Assuredly I am! Ten thousand pounds, which is the utmost they are each entitled to by their father’s will, is no object in this age; and our nobility have more prudence than to marry women merely because they have pretty faces.”—“ If I may judge from my own sentiments, my Lord, their notions are not so illiberal,—they would”——“ I have no doubt but *your notions* are *thoroughly* romantic,—and beg you will spare me from hearing the absurdity of them.” “ I beg your Grace’s pardon; I meant not to trouble you with my conversation.” I was silent; so was he. When we got to his house, by his desire, I followed him to his library. After we were seated, without much preamble, he informed me that it was his

his intention to bring about a match between Lady Henrietta and me. He recapitulated the many obligations I owe him:—*his not marrying a second time, lest it might hurt my fortune;—his trying to gratify every request I made him;—the expensive manner in which he allowed me to live;—and, to complete all, the regard he testified for my happiness, in providing so eligible a connection for me, against my return from abroad:—I could have no objection to it:—every advantage conspired to make it a delightful one:—title, fortune, and merit, centered in Lady Henrietta.* After a full half-hour's panegyric on so desirable an acquisition, he concluded with telling me, that, unless I consented to obey his commands, I never should possess a shilling of his. I did not once interrupt him whilst he spoke, but when want of breath obliged him to stop, I seized the opportunity, and replied—"As to your threat, my Lord, it has no sort of effect on my disposition; for I regard money so little, that your Grace is welcome to dispose of your fortune to any object you think more deserving of it: I shall never murmur. But the reflection that your displeasure will follow my refusing to marry Lady Henrietta, indeed afflicts me,—penetrates me to the heart:—yet I must encounter such a misfortune, since honour to the person you approve of, as well as regard to myself, direct me to shun so horrible an union. Some other man, my Lord, may do justice to the lady's worth—I am insensible to it; and, so far from viewing her in the favourable light you do, confess she is the most disgusting female I ever beheld."—He was outrageous—Having *par malheur* caused it, I was bound to bear it. He *swore by Heaven, he would abandon me*; and added, "In spite of your contempt for money, thou ridiculous blockhead! you will in a short time know its value, when you are destitute of the means to supply yourself with the common sustenance of nature—then you may too late curse your rashness, and regret the forfeiture you now make of my benevolence and tenderness.—As you have

have been educated to fill the *department* of a *very fine* gentleman, I know of no other way you have to avoid for a *while* the gripes of penury, but by taking a purse, or loading the dice."—Oh, Montague!—What language! I would with pleasure have sacrificed a limb at the moment, to have had the consanguinity dissolved, that I might convince him, that

" 'Tho' I am not splenetic and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which should his wisdom fear."

But nothing could break the tie—he was *still my father*—With difficulty I confined my impetuous spirit, and remained silent. He paused, because articulation was denied him—when it returned, he went on thus :

" The expense, the enormous expense I was at during your stay abroad, is well rewarded, my good Marquis, is it not?—Thus it is to pass whole years in planning future felicity for a son, who proves a disgrace to me—Oh good God! why were you not so kind as to ordain, that the same moment which saw his mother expire, should also witness his death?"—I could bear no more; the recollection of his behaviour to that dear departed excellence, fired my soul—

" I sincerely wish it had, my Lord," exclaimed I, " I must be allowed to say, I have had cause to blame Providence for not taking me with that amiable, but most ill-fated woman, ever since I lost her. That *event* was the unhappiest of *my* life—it was, my Lord, the most joyful of yours.—I have always known that you would not have another wish ungratified, had the same burial served us both. It was the will of Heaven that it should not; and my mother's sufferings have been avenged by my living. However, my Lord, in my own vindication, I must presume to contradict your assertion. As yet I have been no disgrace to you; and never, I beg you, say

say so again, till I am actually detected *stealing a purse, or loading the dice*. The obligation between parent and child is mutual—After the words you have spoken, I look upon mine as greatly cancelled.—I will take *this unworthy wretch* from your presence, my Lord;—you shall never more be troubled with him.—Well as I may be taught to know the value of money, I will not supplicate a farthing from you—and may every other of your wishes that *can encrease* your happiness attend you!”—With an enlarged voice he cried, “Thou rash!—thou passionate boy! quit not the house.—Perhaps you mean to build your future prospects on one of the Herbert’s scanty fortune! but I am friend enough to tell you, that Pemberton will not give his sister to a titled beggar.”

“Good God! what a villain, a dark-hearted villain am I thought!—Oh! that such language was delivered from any tongue but a parent’s!—but here it ends.” I motioned towards the door.

“Do not offer to leave my house. To retire will be well, that recollection may teach you the impropriety of such insolence to *that* parent.”

“I mean not to be insolent, my Lord; but whilst I remember what I owe you as a son—I cannot forget what is due to *myself* as a *man*.”

“Well, my heroic youth,” with a cursed contemptible sneer, “you cannot better shew your consideration of *yourself*, than by entering into this alliance—You shall marry Lady Henrietta.” “I cannot, my Lord.” “Determined indeed!—Come, come, Harry, leave your attitudes for the Edgar’s, the Alonzo’s, the Orestes’s of the theatres;—we are performing no scene in a play—sit down and inform me”——

“Suffer me to retire my Lord, or I shall again be called insolent.” “You may, Osmond.” “For ever, my Lord—we shall meet no more!—Think better of me in a calmer moment than you do, and you will not be unjust.” I precipitately withdrew,
and

and heard him ring the bell furiously. I met several servants running with consternation towards the room; they enquired of me the matter. "Do not be alarmed, my friends," replied I: "your Lord is well, but *rather* impatient." I made the best of my way towards the hall; but as every-thing is of moment when one is agitated with hurry to get free, I must mention, that, in crossing the saloon, I found a difficulty in turning the lock of the door that led out of it: it detained me some seconds; and I, not knowing what impertinent roughness I might experience, from seven or eight fellows, hired to obey the despotic will of a furious master, all of whom I heard coming towards the apartment I was in, drew my sword—but, making another effort, I burst open the lock just as they appeared at the other end of the room, and gained the street-door unmolested, before the porter was informed that it was his Lord's intention that it should be barred against my departure.

Was there ever a more ridiculous situation?—For a few minutes I was in doubt whether my father did not mistake my sex, and imagine me his daughter instead of his son. I got into a chair as soon as possible, and was brought home, too much disturbed, you may believe, to know what step to take, or where to fly for consolation. The torments of the damned exceed not what I endured at the idea that my Julia must never be mine.—So far was my father from judging properly of my sentiments, that, had Lord Pemberton presented her to me—nay! had she herself made me a voluntary offer of her hand, I should have had honour enough—affection enough, to have refused either.—But ah! what a trial was I on the verge of encountering!—to bid an eternal adieu to the woman, on whom my soul so fondly doated, that life would be worse than death after the painful separation commenced!—You know, my friend, how much I love, and can conceive what were the struggles of my heart at the time.

I was

I was determined to see Lady Julia before I left London. When the hour arrived for the concert, I ordered my carriage and drove to Berkeley-Square; there I met Lady Pemberton and her *group*—After the concert was over I attended them to the Festino. Once, as I was sitting next to Lady Julia, she asked, *If I was indisposed?* adding, *she thought I was out of spirits.* There was such a melodious harmony in her voice, and so touching a softness in her manner, when she asked the question, that I could scarce refrain from pouring out my soul to her—from telling her of my passion and my despair. Whether my fancy was all delusion, or that the weak mind under affliction seeks to catch at comfort from every appearance which might afford it, I know not—but I imagined the lovely girl discovered a greater attention to my conversation, there beamed forth more complacency from every beautiful feature when she spoke to me, than ever I experienced from her before. I begged her to dance—She *recommended to me not to attempt it, as it might increase my indisposition.* I told her, *if I had not the honour of being her partner, some happier man would enjoy that pleasure, and that I should suffer more from the envy that circumstance must excite in my breast, than I could do from the most violent fatigue.* “How can you be always such a flatterer, my Lord?” “Indeed I am not a flatterer—I speak the real sentiments of my heart—Suffer me to lead you to the set that is forming for a cotillon.” “I would not on any account be instrumental to your Lordship’s illness: I should be execrated by all your friends—*One lady in particular would think on me with horror.*” I persisted in my request—or at least entreated a better reason for not being blessed with her hand. To satisfy me, she pleaded that she was not sufficiently recovered from her late indisposition, to dance. I had the gratification of hearing her refuse several gentlemen. The joy I felt at this little mark of preference could only be equalled by the torture of reflecting that I should

should probably never behold her after that night.—My blood now stagnates at the idea of what I endured at the time. Lady Pemberton proposed going to Ranelagh the next evening, and desired me to be one of her beaux.—Every thing combined to heighten my anguish!—I know not how we happened to speak of Elliot, but Lady Julia expatiated to me on his worth, and lamented his absence. She asked me *whether I did not join in her sentiments of him?* I answered *that I did indeed! and compassionated his sufferings more than it was in the possibility of words to express; for I believed few miseries could equal his.* “What am I to understand by that, my Lord!—I hope Col. Elliot is not so very unhappy as you think him!” “Surely he is, Lady Julia: to love such an object as your sister, and to know she never will be his, is bitterness of sorrow not to be borne—there is not that curse upon earth which comes up to loving passionately and without hope.” I spoke unguardedly—and as unguardedly clasped my hands precipitately—and sighed.—I recollected myself, and dared to look up to Lady Julia. The colour had left her cheeks; her eyes were fixed on me with astonishment. “Is not such a man entitled to pity, my Lady?” “The subject is a melancholy one, my Lord; we will change it. Sensibility is a quality not to be encouraged in such a place, our *modern fine* people think—but it is only *at present* I wish to banish it, as my spirits have not yet arrived at their usual height; they have been most miserably depressed since the day you afforded me such kind assistance, and the admittance of so painful a guest would make them as bad as ever.”

When the dreadful moment arrived that announced their departure, I was petrified—yet I collected strength enough to take Lady Julia’s hand. I found she had resigned her place in the coach to Lady Sophia Nevill, and that she and Lady Mortimer went in their chairs. The two ladies, therefore, Sir James Westbrook, and myself, separated from the rest to

go out by another way. As I put Lady Julia in, I slipped down her glove, and pressed her snowy wrist to my lips with ardour, once or twice. I clasped her hand to my heart whilst I took a *last* view of her heavenly face—Something I said in excuse for my freedom—what it was, I know not—then threw myself into my carriage, and played the boy—Had I not been relieved in that manner, I must have been suffocated.—Never more to breathe was the sincere wish of my soul.

My determination was to have gone off with Captain Audley to Portsmouth, and to have embarked with him as a volunteer against the Americans. He is an intimate friend of mine, and I knew I could command him. I intended, after I got home, to undress, go to his lodgings, and lay my case before him—No time was to be lost—I purposed leaving London (and for ever) in four hours after.

On alighting, Souville met me with business in his countenance—

“ My Lor, Monsieur Freebourne has been here dese two tree times, sin you hab been gone—he say”—I desired him *to have a little patience till I got to my study, and then tell me what he said.* I did not chuse that my footmen, &c. should be privy to my father’s and my quarrel, though I had no doubt but it was well known to every servant of the Duke’s. When Souville’s tongue was at liberty, he told me in his own language, (finding he could make no way in English, though he is fond of shewing the proficiency *he thinks* he gains in it,) *that Freebourne (my father’s butler) was much distressed at finding he could not see me: he suspected for a long time that I was at home, and had given orders to be denied to him. He waited till two o’clock, and then declaring that his Grace would be distracted, called for pen, ink, &c. and, having written and carefully sealed a letter, put it into his hands, conjuring him, as he valued my happiness, to delay not a minute to deliver it to me at my return.* I tore it open, and found it enclosed

one

one from the Duke. The contents amazed me. I perused it three times before I could prevail on myself to believe I was awake.—So different a style from what I expected—Surely, thought I, the Duke is not inventing some new method of being yet more cruel! His letter contained accusations of himself. *He did not (it said) deserve my forgiveness of his conduct; the barbarity of which struck him with remorse the instant I quitted him. He was anxious for me to return, that he might tell me so, and beg my pardon; therefore sent his servants to prevent my departure. As he took this method of informing me of his motive for causing them to behave in all appearance to me so insolently, he hoped I would forgive it, and of my own accord go to him the instant I had read his letter: that, from any other man, he would despair of obtaining the request, after such vile provocation as was given in the morning; but when he thought on my sensibility, my generosity, and benevolence, he had not a doubt of my relieving the heart of one who had even injured me; especially as that heart was so much attached to me, that, should I leave England with an intention of going on any hazardous employment, (which he feared might be my purpose,) it would surely break; and he was persuaded I could not enjoy peace when I recollected that I had shortened his days. He concludes with bemoaning his unhappy temper, which carries him into such improprieties that he is not fit to live.*

Unfortunate man! at the time I condemn, I pity him!—Strict as our friendship has ever been, dear Montague, I have always veiled, as much as possible, this failing of my father's to you. You often questioned me about it from your own suspicions. The whole truth could not be concealed—yet, as well as I could, I screened him from censure, and, though I deceived you, thought myself justified from the motive. It is to no purpose to carry on the mask any longer, and I will reserve nothing from your sympathizing bosom. As soon as I considered a little on my father's letter, I resolved to
attend

attend him the moment he would be visible in the morning—But I doubted his protestations: I supposed the greatest advantage I should reap from them, would be a six months change of conduct. During *that time* I should be at liberty to go where I pleased without controul, or enter into any pleasures my heart approved—but then—yet to proceed——

Honest Freebourn's letter was to this purpose: After apologizing for the liberty, &c. &c. he says,

That he must give me a piece of information which concerned me nearly. Two years ago, the Duke mentioned to him, in strict confidence, that my mother's sister, Lady Ann Skefley, left me at her death two thousand a year; which I was to be put in possession of at the age of one and twenty, and to hold it entirely independent of my father, whose name she execrated for not having been the tenderest of husbands to the most deserving of women.

As my father always had it in his view to form a connection between Lady Henrietta and me, he judged it proper to conceal from me this circumstance; lest a knowledge of my having resources, exclusive of what centered in his fortune, might lead me to be refractory to his will: to effect which, he thought it necessary to keep me abroad, till the very eve of the time that the marriage should be consummated, fearing, amongst my numerous acquaintance, the generosity of Lady Anne in my favour, should, in spite of his vigilance, become public, and, through some blunder or officiousness of theirs in conversation, reach my ear prematurely. The secret, he adds, should never have escaped him, had he not dreaded that I should be persuaded to marry against my inclination, from the apprehension of being thrown destitute on the world if I refused obedience to my father's harsh commands;—or, if I had resolution enough to reject the unnatural authority, he trembled with horror to imagine, that in all probability I might put myself in the way of danger, and be in haste to quit a world that I was instructed to think contained nothing but dependence and poverty

poverty for me. His timely breach of confidence he hopes will save me from either fate; and he shall bless the hour in which he gave up so ungenerous a trust. He urges me to be reconciled to my father; fears I behaved with more impatience to him than I ought to have shewn; and pours forth thro' the whole such a warmth of affection, as softened me more, a million of times, than my father's submissive, artful letter: artful I fear, is the just term.

Many a time has Freebourne risked being turned out of my father's employ, lest "*he should spoil me.*" He has been my monitor—my champion—and my consoler—In short, I have experienced more tenderness from him in one hour, than I ever did in my whole life from the man who was author of my birth. And let me own, my Montague, there was a time, which memory will never permit to lose sight of, that he was far the dearer to me of the two. Once (when six years old) I incurred his Grace's displeasure most severely, by saying, in the innocent frankness of my heart, "I wish my Lord you had some other son in my stead, and I was Freebourne's! I should dwell at his house below the westward copse, and go as plainly clad as a shepherd's boy. I would lie awake whole nights studying how to give him pleasure: he would be so kind to me, no one would ever see me cry, my Lord, as long as he lived—I should be the happiest boy in the world." After being chastised for testifying so *groveling* a disposition, and so little gratitude for *his fondness*; I was dragged from my mother's arms, where I had sought refuge from his sternness, and banished *her* presence for some days. Pardon this puerile anecdote: 'tis meant to give you a specimen of the man, on whom, Heaven be praised, I no longer hold myself *absolutely* dependent.

When my unfortunate mother died—Oh, my heart!—how freshly do the wounds bleed which that horrid incident first caused!—When I had received her last kiss, wetted her cold hand with my tears—and heard her last fervent recommendation of me

to Heaven—when I once more clasped my arms about her neck, and, with a voice choaked with sobs, implored her not to leave me to my unkind father's care, but still to live and guard me from him—in that agonizing moment I heard her groan—I called her—All the reply she made was “Ah, my unhappy child!” Again I called on her—She could not answer—the breath fled with another heart-rending groan.—Such a scene was too dreadful for a boy of nine years of age to contend with, who had no fortitude to support him, whose disposition was sensibility and gentleness combined, which was naturally inherited from, and strengthened by, the example of the best mother that ever existed—In the shocking instant that she expired, I shrieked and fainted. When I recovered, I found myself in my apartment in Freebourn's arms, who wept with me—who comforted me—who, in short, supplied her place to me till I was sent abroad.—Excuse this digression; my tears will yet fall at this dismal recollection.

* * * * *

You will wonder how a man, so much *my friend*, should be chosen my father's confidant.—His long residence in the family, which occasions his being treated more as a companion than a servant—his astonishing worth and tried honour, unite to make him a respectable person in every one's opinion. My father loves him, I am persuaded, the best of any creature breathing; therefore your admiration will cease at the Duke's lodging such a secret in his breast, when these circumstances are considered.

I blessed my good fortune for giving me a few more opportunities of conversing with my lovely Julia—Her condescending behaviour was thought on with transport—My enraptured imagination fabricated a hundred airy structures in consequence of it—and this exclamation frequently passed my lips: “If she loves me but well enough to give up more splendid offers, and be satisfied with an humble two thousand

thousand a year, how supremely blessed shall I be!" In this pleasing train of thoughts, instead of going to Audley's, I went—to bed——

About the time that I thought the Duke would be up, I repaired to Grosvenor-Square. As soon as I entered the hall, Freebourne met me with joy sparkling in his eyes. "Now my Lord, you act like yourself—Blessings on your amiable, noble heart! We shall all be happy yet, and no cursed Lady Henrietta prevent it.—I am sure it will be needless to caution Lord Osmond against saying a word of the information that I gave; at least, that *I* was the person you received it from."

"Suspect me not, dear Freebourne," clasping his hand, "of turning the obligation I owe to you, to your disadvantage—depend upon me!—All that I fear myself in, is in never being able to convince you properly of my gratitude and affection." We reached the Duke's apartment before he could answer. My father embraced me cordially; and I, without giving him time to speak, thanked him for his condescending letter, and intreated him to overlook whatever errors I committed the preceding day. He seemed confused, and generously exclaimed, "You have no errors, my amiable boy—I never treated you well—repentance fills my soul. I know not how dear you were to me till on the brink of losing you. From hence I will subdue my faults, and be more worthy of the happiness I possess in such a son." Again he threw his arms around me, and desired the past unhappy quarrel might never recur in our future conversations. I bowed assent, and we changed the topic.

After breakfast he ordered his chariot, purposing to pay some visits, and then attend the House. "Where do you dine, Harry?" "Your Grace forgets that I am engaged to you." He smiled. "I am glad you remember it; but I fear you will have no one to meet you." I paid him the common compliment, *that I desired no other company than his.*

As

As I went with him out he asked, *if he should set me down?* I thanked and refused him. At parting he told me, *I must oblige him so far, as to go with him in the evening to pay a visit;* adding, “I will not deceive you—’tis to a lady.” I started. “Nay, I cannot make you marry her, Harry, if you are determined against it;—but I think there will be no very great matter in gratifying me so far as just to accompany me on a common visit.”——“On a common visit, my Lord, I will attend you there.” He seemed rather inclined to be agitated; but, catching himself, turned it off in a jest, saying, “Upon my faith you are afraid to trust yourself with women! I suspect that you have found them too fond of you hitherto.” He got into his carriage and drove off, and I proceeded to the spot of earth that I most venerate—Portman-Square. I felt less pleasure than usual when I rapped at Lady Pemberton’s door, as I went to excuse myself from meeting her in the evening at Ranelagh.

I found the two Lady Herbert’s waiting for Lady Percival and Miss Edgcumb, who were to accompany them in a walk in Kensington Gardens. On my entrance, a deep blush diffused itself over Lady Julia’s cheeks.—My timid soul (where she is concerned) suggested it sprang from anger at the liberty I had taken the night before—She was reserved to me—Lady Almeria expressed concern that I was not to be of their party, and asked “what could hinder it?” Her sister told her, *I must think her very curious!* “Why should Lady Julia be so unjust?” “It is natural for your Lordship to draw that conclusion from the freedom of my sister’s question.” I begged her pardon, and answered Lady Almeria, *that I was indispensably obliged to attend my father on a visit.* The conversation turned on music. I spoke of Lady Louisa Sydney’s performance with the praises it deserves:—her friend’s eyes beamed with pleasure, and she again smiled on me; but, recollecting herself suddenly, drew up her pretty mouth,

and resumed her gravity. Lady Almeria proposed spending the time they had to wait for the ladies in the music-room: my sweet Julia assented, and thither we repaired. I will not expatiate upon the execution of these two charming girls—you have heard them, and are a competent judge of music. I could not prevail on Lady Julia to sing: her sister favoured me at the first entreaty; yet I hear *mielarissima* is not inferior to the obliging Almeria in that excellent accomplishment—superior I do not believe it possible for her to be. Lady Almeria went up to her closet to bring me a song that she admired much, which Sir John Benyon had that morning given her. I seized the moment of her absence to entreat to know the cause of Lady Julia's seriousness. She blushed. "If, Madam, I unfortunately incurred your displeasure by the liberty I presumed to take last night, I shall be the most miserable of men; yet suffer me to say in my vindication, that, at the moment I yielded to the temptation of saluting your hand, I meant nothing but the highest respect to you.—Perhaps, were you sensible of the situation of my heart at the instant, instead of being thought to merit your displeasure, which I cannot endure, I should meet with compassion from the most benevolent soul that ever inhabited a human form." Her confusion increased. "You meant not to offend, you say, my Lord." "No, Madam—Heaven is my witness—Your anger would be the greatest torment that could be inflicted on me;—a man who"—"Well, my Lord, there is an end of it—I own I thought you too free—for the future you will be less so." "And do you promise cordially to forgive me?" "Certainly." "Nay! it must be sealed by a permission of the very act for which I have been condemned, or I shall think you still continue offended." And I carried her hand (no cursed glove to intercept my happiness) to my lips. She blushed a deeper red than ever, hastily withdrew her hand, but, smiling, called me "a strange

strange creature!" What a critical situation was I in! Had not Lady Almeria at that moment entered, I should have made a full avowal of my passion, which I have reason to hope would not have been disgusting to her.

Soon after, the ladies came in, and by their invitation I accompanied them to the gardens. Lady Julia's spirits returned, and her manner towards me was all condescension.——Montague, if I do not flatter myself, I perceive a dawning tenderness;—yet, what an arrogant wretch perhaps I am, in giving way to the delightful conjecture!—All I can say is——If I am indeed so superlatively blessed—if Lady Julia does bestow on me a favourable distinction—I ask no more of fate;—let it dispose of me as it will;—and, tho' loaded with every calamity that human nature can support, I would not exchange conditions with an Emperor.

I returned to St. James's Square just time enough to dress, and be with my father by his hour of dining. He had brought Budenall home with him. Belfield and Montague were there before me; so instead of a dull *tête-à-tête*, as he taught me to expect, we passed an agreeable day. When they left us we stepped into my Vis-à-Vis, and drove to Mrs Aubrey's: she, as well as her niece, were in expectation of us I am sure.

I endeavoured to be polite, but very distant to Lady Henrietta. The conversation was general: we went over all the *chit-chat* that is worn threadbare by so much use. The aunt directed her discourse entirely to the Duke, leaving me to entertain Lady Henrietta, who, to say the truth, gave me so much encouragement, as, were I inclined *that way*, would have made me very happy. It is a delicate subject we get upon, when we venture to arraign a lady's conduct—but I will *whisper* to you—and you alone, that her advances were very plain.——There appeared not the least of that sweet modest diffidence in her behaviour which is woman's most captivating

recommendation; and which is so resplendent in every turn, in every look of my divine Julia's—And what gave the finishing stroke to my prejudice against Lady Henrietta, was a sort of contented air she assumed, as much as to say, "I am sure of you; you must either marry me, or become indigent." Indelicate, hateful creature!—how rejoiced I am, that I hesitated not to declare my sentiments of her to my father!—Amongst many other questions ridiculous enough, she asked, *If I was not very fond of dancing?* "No," I answered; "I very seldom found amusement in it." *She was surprised; for she always observed that I danced at every public place, which could hardly be the case, unless I liked it.* "When one can obtain, my Lady, the happiness of an Almeria's, or a Julia's hand, it makes a great difference: *then* a diversion, which is rather unpleasant than the reverse to me, becomes delightful—and a whole night with such a partner appears but a short hour."—"What, you are an admirer of the Lady Herbert's, my Lord!" "I am indeed—England must glory in producing such women. Does not your Ladyship admire them?"—"I think them very well—but surely not so *exquisitely fascinating* as you and a few more of your sex suppose them.—It would be better if Lady Julia did not laugh so wide to shew her teeth: it diverts me, when I see her, I confess." "Is that all you can lay to her charge? Happy Julia!—But, Lady Henrietta, were you of *our sex*, you would not fail to experience the effects of such beauty as the three sisters possess, particularly the two youngest. Ladies cannot be as good judges of the female charms as we are." We were interrupted by Sophia Neville and her father's appearance. I rejoiced at the relief, and changed my seat to one nearer the fair visitor. After spending some minutes in raillery on a trifling jest that had passed between her and Sir James Westbrook, I asked her *why she was not at Ranelagh?* and said, *the sight of her in such a dull set*

as I was found in was as great a happiness to me as it was unexpected. I forget what answer she made, but she gave me the most penetrating look I ever beheld; and shortly after exclaimed, "Surely, my Lord, you will never more be angry at our mentioning Lady Henrietta as your future"—"What do you mean, dear Lady Sophia!" "Nay, this is too palpable a dissimulation!—you cannot throw a veil over my eyes, though you made us deaf to reports;—but methinks so much secrecy on the occasion is paying a bad compliment to your *adorable!*" and she laughed heartily. How devilishly vexed I was at my awkward situation! Lady Sophia, turning to the ladies, (whose curious eyes seemed to wonder at and not much relish our speaking apart,) joined in their conversation, and left me to brood over my reflections, which were not the most agreeable in the world. I thought my father would never have quitted the theme he had got upon (politics) with the Duke of Northington (whom by the bye he hates heartily); but, when my patience was entirely exhausted, he at last made his bow, and I with rapture left a house I solemnly vowed not to enter again soon.

The Duke took it into his head to look in at the new farce at Drury Lane. I was obliged to attend him, and, after setting him down at home, I went to Ranelagh. It was past one o'clock when I got there. In vain did I search for Lady Pemberton's party. At last I met Seymour, who told me *he had just that minute put Lady Almeria into her coach*; but that I should find Lady Mortimer and Miss Edgcomb waiting for the former's carriage in the outward room. I flew to the place, and related to the laughing Caroline my disappointment. She said, *I deserved it, for not giving up all other engagements to make one in so chearful a group as theirs was.*

"And have you passed a very agreeable evening?"

"Oh, exceedingly so!—pleasure danced in every eye but Lord Seymour's," who at the instant joined us.—"I would advise you, my Lord," in a half whisper,

loud enough for him to hear, "never to be in love—you cannot think how it spoils a young man!—What a lively agreeable was this, till he received a hurt from coral lips and black eyes!—now, he is so melancholy—I have not patience with him. Do pray give him some remedy for his disease;—perhaps travelling makes the heart callous!—Does it, my Lord?"

Seymour caught hold of one hand, I of the other.—"Stop," cried he; "pity, but do not ridicule me;—I am very unfortunate."

"No, indeed you are not," she replied: "a man of your person, understanding, and *degagée* manner, to give himself up thus, because a capricious girl is blind to merit that would engage the hearts of a thousand of our other young women, not inferior to her in beauty or sense!—fie, my Lord!"

Mortimer and Budenall returning, the Ladies got up. I led Lady Mortimer out, and whispered in her ear, "I understand your satire; you have discovered that I love;—but if the amiable object is equally insensible to all, what will become of *me*?" "Travel again, my Lord—good night!"—"Cruel Lady Mortimer!" and she got into the coach.

I had no further inducement to stay at Ranelagh, and agreed to sup with Budenall and Seymour at Jenkins's club.

I called yesterday in Portman-Square, but was not admitted. Pemberton will be married in a few days, I am told.

I expect to see you very shortly now in town.—You will judge this letter to be *more* than sufficiently long, if I add no more, than that I am,

Faithfully yours,

OSMOND.

T.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Portman-Square.

YOU will condemn me for not answering your letter sooner—I condemn *myself* for it—but my candour shall claim your forgiveness, and you are too humane to refuse it.—That letter, my friend—what truths has it revealed to me!—It should have been acknowledged long ago, but for a backwardness I felt to confess a weakness which you have discovered.—Yes, Louisa, I love:—unfortunately as my last attachment turned out, I have dared to give place to another in my bosom—Lenox's name is no longer prohibited your utterance—talk of him—represent his sufferings to me;—bring back to my recollection, with all its force, the time when I was on the brink of being united to him by indissoluble bands.—Paint his agonies at quitting me for ever—my own distress at being obliged to inflict those sorrows which I could not relieve.—Ah, no!—speak not, write not of him:—I must not be unjust—what I now endure, convinces me that I never loved him;—and to my better genius I am thankful, who snatched me from an alliance on which my soul looks back with horror. Again I say—write not of Lenox—but let a better subject guide your pen; and, if you wish to gratify my heart, suffer the name of Osmond to appear in every sentence of your letter. Blame me not, Louisa;—if it is my fate to adore one whom I never shall be entitled to call mine, I stand in need of the sympathizing sigh of friendship to console me. To be a frequent witness to so accomplished a person; to listen to such amiable sentiments; to be daily informed of some resplendent *trait* in so exalted a character; to observe a thousand unspeakable tender attentions in his manner to me—what else could happen?—Yes, Louisa, I see my misery in its fullest extent;—I see that I ardently love Lord Osmond, and—that he is destined for another.

And yet I surely received marks of a predilection from the Marquis, that might easily have been supposed to originate from a more substantial cause than *were* gallantry!—I was constantly distinguished by him—his address spoke the language of passion—the softest passion in the world. Several times has he seemed ready to pronounce, “I love you to distraction, Julia! but, from an apparent timidity, the expression has died away upon his tongue before he could give it sufficient utterance to reach my ear. Is it possible that my vanity could have so far misled my senses as only to have supposed this!—I fear it did.

Many nights ago we were at the Festino—Lord Osmond appeared dejected—he was indisposed. He never left my side, but his conversation was quite general. Undoubtedly some happy foreigner is in possession of his heart!—Perhaps his distinction of me proceeds from a slight resemblance I bear her!—or, perhaps, as I am of a graver turn than either of my sisters, or Sophia Nevill, and satter to attend to a person of a melancholy disposition, he may prefer my conversation to theirs. But this I know, that, until that evening, I never discovered the gloom on my Lord’s countenance, which struck you so immediately on your first meeting. Once he exclaimed, with warmth and inadvertency, “There is surely no torment equal to that of loving passionately and without hope!”—My God! can Osmond love without hope!—I looked at him involuntarily: surprize must have been in my countenance—dismay and horror were in my heart.—His hands I saw were clasped; tears stood in his eyes. He caught my looks—and recovered himself. What amazed me most was, that, as he led me to my chair, he was agitated, and in a tremor.—We were obliged to stop near the door for a minute, from the numerous crowd that surrounded

us; he slipped my glove almost off my hand, and kissed my arm with fervor: at the same moment exclaimed,

“Heaven preserve the loveliest of its works! and inspire my Julia with compassion for the most ardent and unfortunate of lovers! Pardon the liberty I have taken—Oh, Madam! how thankful should I be, were this instant to be the last of my existence!” As he ended, he put me into the chair and disappeared.—I looked for him with impatience whilst there was a possibility of my seeing him—he was not to be seen—then burst into tears, and was overwhelmed with a grief equal to his, from whatever cause it sprang. The terror I was in all night is not to be told—I felt as if I was not to behold Lord Osmond any more—Good God! what a time I passed! The distress of my soul must have been discovered, had I not complained the next morning of suffering from a head-ach.—But judge what a joyful transition there was in my bosom from grief to happiness, when, as I was sitting with Almeria, in expectation of Lady Percival and Miss Edgcumb, (who had engaged us to walk with them,) I heard Lord Osmond announced. I felt my cheeks glow as he entered; I hardly knew how to behave.—As anxiety fled, resentment took its place for the liberty he had taken the preceding night; and I held it incumbent on me to let him see that I was displeased.

He came to apologize for not meeting us at Ranelagh. *An indispensable engagement prevented it.* We agreed to go into the concert-room, and while away the minutes we waited for the ladies, at the harpsichord.—I fear that I appeared perverse and disobliging in refusing to sing; but indeed, Louisa, I dared not trust my voice, which I apprehended would too plainly reveal the fluttering emotions of my heart. What an admirable proficient in music is my Lord! Every touch of his finger produces harmony itself.

My sister left us for a few minutes, and Lord Osmond entreated me to pardon the freedom he had used the night before, which, it was evident, he said, had drawn on him my displeasure—He offered some excuses—but, to say the truth, I was so confused as to be incapable of paying much attention to them.

It certainly would have been ridiculous to have made a serious matter of a circumstance so trifling, that, once apologized for, became of no further consequence.—He accompanied us to Kensington Gardens; and never appeared more agreeable or in better spirits. Strange contrast to what he was a few hours before!—We have seen Lord Osmond frequently since;—have made many parties with him, and he has been each time more charming. This evening he is to sup in Portman-Square, with his friend Mr. Montague, and several others.—Adieu for the present!

* * * * *

Wednesday Morning.

And now, dear Louisa, I am indeed inexpressibly wretched!—credulous—arrogant fool that I was, to suffer an idea of Lord Osmond's giving me a preference to make its way to my imagination!—Good God, how amazed at myself I am!—No, my friend—it is to Lady Henrietta he sighs in private!—his inattention to her in public is the effect of artifice—I am the deluded creature with whom he trifles before a crowd—whose happiness he wishes to make a sacrifice to his vanity—Perhaps he perceives that he succeeds to his most sanguine hopes—exults with his Henrietta at his triumph, and laughs at my weakness——Cruel—ungenerous Osmond!

As Sophia and I were sitting together on a sofa, Lord Osmond came to us, and desired to divide us.—He was uncommonly vivacious—She enquired, in a very sarcastic manner, *Where Lady Henrietta was?*

He

He threw down his eyes and blushed. "What is the meaning, my Lord, that you take so little notice of her in company?—Julia, you never saw any-one play the lover better than Lord Osmond does!" "I dare say his Lordship acquits himself well in every character." "He does indeed most particularly well in *that line*. I had an instance of it, more than a fortnight ago, at Mrs. Aubrey's. My father and I paid that lady a visit rather *mal-à-propos* one night: as we entered the room, I perceived Lord Osmond seated at a distant part of it next his *Cara*, to whom, no doubt, he had been saying ten thousand fine things;—but, on seeing us, he left his place, and approached me with no little confusion in his looks; and the first speech he made was to enquire *why I was not at Ranelagh with Lady Pemberton and her family?*" "Dear Lady Sophia, how can you carry your raillery so far? Lady Henrietta is the most insupportable of"——"Hush! my Lord, you may remember I told you, that I hoped you would no longer deny your attachment to her after that night.—Upon my word, Julia, what I tell you is a fact.—I should never have mentioned this circumstance to my Lord Osmond; or jested at all with him upon the topic; had he not taken such unwearied and unnecessary pains to convince us there was nothing in a report so common in every mouth.—But why make this ænigma of it, my Lord?—The Duke of Westmoreland's frequent and familiar whispers with Mrs. Aubrey in public—the attention you pay her niece—at home,—all declare that we shall soon offer our congratulations to Henrietta Marchioness of Osmond.—Surely, as I reminded you *that night*, you pay an ill compliment to your mistress in using so much secrecy!—She is well entitled to your adoration, amiable—accomplished—talkative—very rich—not handsome indeed, but what then! You know

"It is not a set of features, or complexion, the Tincture of a skin" —————

I do

I do believe you will be the envy of our British youths." My sister Caroline joined us. "For heaven's sake, my Lord, what have these girls been saying to embarrass you so much?" My cousin was beginning to repeat what had passed, when I, hurt at the ungenerous Osmond's confusion, prevented her: "Stop, my Sophia,—you are always delicate and good;—do not deviate"—"I have told you my reason, Julia; Lord Osmond deserves not to be spared:—my friendship for his future wife leads me to condemn his conduct to her, in so much ambiguity. Lady Mortimer, send Julia to comfort Lord Seymour,—or one of her *many lovers* now in the room; and I will repeat the whole to you."

"Go, Julia—Sir James, my sister has a party to propose to you, for the exhibition to-morrow." Westbrook took my hand, and endeavoured to draw me away. "Be quiet, Sir James—I will not leave my place, if it is to give an opportunity for inflicting a momentary distress on any-one.—My Lord, why do you not silence them? One retort to the person who has shewn you so little mercy, will, in an instant, make her dumb." "Thank you, Julia!" cried Sophia, and walked off. "Now, my Lord, that I have rid you of one tormentor, I will leave you to manage the other:"—and I joined Sophia, who was looking over Almeria's cards. Lord Osmond and my sister had a long conversation: what their topic was I am ignorant. My mother and the Duke are busied about this approaching marriage;—they were in close conference together most part of the evening before supper. Sophia went to cards at another table from Almeria's; and I had no other amusement, than fixing my eyes alternately on my knotting, and on Lord Osmond and my sister:—several times I caught them looking at me with attention; complacency and smiles adorned Lady Mortimer's really handsome face, and the fire of her eyes yielded to the soft beam of compassion. What could they have been speaking of!

My brother came home but just time enough to meet us going down to the eating-room. An engagement, that he could not put off, had carried him abroad.

Our company did not separate till three o'clock this morning;—most of them thought the time delightfully spent.—I confess I was not of the number;—thorns were planted in my breast, and I longed with impatience for the hour, when, reclined on my pillow, I might give vent to my sighs and tears, without causing suspicion or anxiety in any bosom.

So far, my Louisa, all is well. I have not been imprudent in giving to Lord Osmond much encouragement;—though more than ever I bestowed on any man in my life. At first I feared he was no stranger to my partiality towards him;—but, all things calmly considered, I find it impossible he should have ever made a discovery so flattering to him,—so degrading to me.—I am to thank Providence for opening my eyes in time,—that I might be discreet enough to hinder the world from diving into this secret which it concerns my pride to keep inviolable from all but you.—Yet, Oh my Louisa! whilst I stand unimpeached in the opinion of *this* world;—a world I despise beyond every thing;—how—in what manner shall I conceal from *myself* the agonies of my soul?—When Lord Osmond has paid his vows at the altar to another, and put it out of my power (without deeming it criminal) to love him as I now do;—where am I to find consolation?—To meet Henrietta, the wife of a man who commands every wish of my heart;—to behold him paying her strict attention, authorized by duty to do so!—Agonizing reflections!—why do ye haunt me!—My tears blot my paper;—pardon this weakness!—

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From hence, I give up every flattering prospect—each gay hope;—those that I once formed,—
invo-

involuntarily formed, seem to me reversed:—all the happiness that awaited me has

“ —dissolv'd, and, like
The baseless fabric of a vision, left
Not a wreck behind !”

Ah, my God!—how unfortunate I am!—but I should not murmur:—if I recal to my remembrance all that has passed within these five or six months, I must find that I have much reason to lay the blame of my present uneasiness to my own imprudence. No one else can I in justice condemn. Lord Osmond never professed himself my lover;—I was warned, from every voice, that he came over, as the destined husband of Lady Henrietta:—he was so universally regarded in that light, that his compliments excited no jealousy in the breast of Lord Seymour; his constantly dancing with me did not make Lord Budenall change colour, or become peevish; his particular notice drew on me no reproaches from the Count:—how plain a demonstration that they were sure of his engagement!— Yet I, blinded by his vague denials of the fact,—and ready to believe what I too ardently wished might be true, gave up my reason to an insatuated credulity, which has for ever destroyed my peace. His flattering distinction gratified my vanity;—and I forgot that he was just arrived from a court, where a man impresses favourable sentiments on all, by the most finished gallantry he can display. He could not then of a sudden throw aside a character that custom had rendered so familiar to him,—and which, no doubt, had made him the idol of a set of women entirely devoted to coquetry. What dismal effects has it produced on an artless, unsuspecting heart! Certainly he deemed his assiduities nothing but what were becoming *un galant homme*, who meant no serious consequences should accrue to *himself* from them;—and I, poor silly girl! ought to have regarded them in the proper point of view.

view.---I will not see Lord Osmond:—it shall be my study to avoid him: I will go no more into public; when he comes to the house, I will frame excuses to keep my apartments. How ridiculous!—Oh, Heaven!—shall error always lead me by the hand!---Who will not form suspicions from such an alteration?---Who can fail of discovering the right cause!---Yes, yes! I must behold him; but it shall be with so much caution,---I will afford him so few opportunities of conversing with me *particularly*, that he shall have reason to think, were it his fate to change the object of his love, and, instead of kneeling at Lady Henrietta's feet, prostrate himself and sigh at mine, I would discard him without hesitation, and recommend to him to seek an humbler mistress. My haughty soul tells me, that I owe such behaviour to my sentiments and education. This pride may be arrogant to many, who would throw reflections on the scanty provision my father thought proper to allow me. Illiberal creatures!---It is true, I have not the twentieth part of Lady Henrietta's fortune;---but that consideration does not lower me in the least. I despise all who plume themselves on a quantity of shining metal, which industry can as soon put the mechanic in possession of, as places, pensions, or tinselled honors can the peer. You know me enough to be assured, that I have never once regretted that it was my father's pleasure to circumscribe the portions of his daughters: I knew his reason, and applauded it.

“Never,” would he say—I was too young when we lost him, to remember him;—but my mother has often repeated his sentiment to us—“never will I make my girls fortunes objects for the other sex to court them. With beauty they will attract,—their merit must secure conquests,—and their birth will be an incentive for their connection being sought after by men of rank: therefore, by giving them a genteel competency, and no more, I leave them a better

better chance for happiness; since the men who marry them---must marry them from love alone." My Lord Pemberton carried this notion so far, as to make my brother liable (by drawing and signing instruments of writing, proper for the purpose, and depositing them in the hands of the L**d C*****) to the forfeiture of two thirds of his fortune, if he added a shilling more to the sum he allotted us.---In his last moments he informed my mother and Lord Herbert of the disposition of his will.---They remonstrated---entreated of him to recal what they termed an injustice to his girls:---it was in vain!---my father was absolute; and for the first time regarded them with sternness, and *insisted that his mandate should be obeyed; and he not disturbed in his dying hour.* They were silent.---In a few minutes after he enquired for us;---we were brought to him.---I cannot dwell upon the scene---he died, and left a wife to regret the fondest husband; ---children, to weep for the tenderest parent; ---and servants to lament the kindest master in the world.---This irreparable loss was occasioned by the working-out of a ball, which had entered some where in my Lord's chest, at an engagement in the last war. We will leave this melancholy part of the subject.

If you should arraign my father for that one circumstance of not doing more for us;---turn back to the motive which actuated him, and he will stand acquitted in your opinion.---You will rejoice with me at the interference of Providence, by considering, that, had it been otherwise, how much more miserable would have been my fate. Lord Pemberton, from his immense possessions, and quantity of ready money, might have left his daughters sixty thousand pounds apiece (it was expected that he would do so). Such a sum would have been a great object for even an avaricious young man.---Perhaps Lord Osmond might have sacrificed a few thousands, and given up Lady Henrietta to a greater gratification of his fancy!

fancy!--Perhaps, from his notice of me,—I should have been the person he chose to offer his hand to:—it would have been accepted without hesitation:—nor would a suspicion, that, had I less money, I could not have been his choice, corrode my breast. My poverty is the touchstone-- it proves him unworthy of my attachment; yet unhappy as *that* attachment makes me, this reflection brings comfort with it. I fear he is very confined in his sentiments. With the expectation of a fortune of thirty-thousand pounds a year, to think himself obliged to accumulate it, by marrying merely from lucrative views!--Unworthy Osmond!

Almeria said last night, "I am sure, Julia, the Marquis loves you; but will not declare it, because you are destitute of money equal to his desires." How I glory in my situation!--Do you not perceive the good effects that spring from my dear father's judicious foresight?—Indeed, Louisa, I do not wish to be richer than I am; my most ambitious wants are satisfied, and I have it in my power to relieve in a moderate degree those of others. What more can I desire?

In the mood I am, I think, were I to see my Lord Osmond, I should regard him with contempt; ---his invading me with compliments, I would hold to be officious arrogance;—any particular distinction must be deemed insolent presumption;—his fixing his eyes on me with the tenderness he always assumes, would be construed into incorrigible familiarity.---Ah, Louisa! what is become of your Julia!--Is this unhappy passion to alter her disposition? The Duke of Northington for ever tells me, *that my greatest merit with him is gentleness*. He will tell me so no more!--Were he to behold what I have written, he would blush as much for his niece, as she does for herself. As a punishment for a fault my heart already disclaims,---I will expose it to you.---But Oh, Louisa!--pity and forgive me!--With what supplication I conclude; first hoping you are
at

at this moment in the enjoyment of such rest as my pillow no longer affords me.



Friday Morning.

I am sure you will rejoice at being told, what I am just made acquainted with, that next Thursday is the day fixed on for my brother's wedding: may it be ever held an auspicious one by the happy pair!

From St. George's church, (my uncle will admit of no special licence, though Lord Pemberton is almost ready to murmur at his refusal,) the bride and bridegroom, Lady Pemberton, the Duke, Almeria, and Sir James Westbrook, go down to my brother's seat in Hertfordshire. Westbrook whispered me, *that he would be best pleased not to be of the party, which he foresaw would be stupid enough; and that he had some thoughts of being indisposed on Tuesday.* I declared I had a mind to inform them how much obliged to him they were. He turned it off in a jest, but I believe he was a good deal in earnest at first. The Mortimers cannot leave town, and have entreated my mother to allow me to stay with them during the fortnight they will be absent;---my mother, all goodness, has consented.---I shall not be missed from the party, and it is a great gratification to me to be left for a while with my sweet amiable Caroline, whose worth you know as well as I do.

Lady Pemberton sends to desire I will attend her to pay some visits.---Adieu, my ever-dearest---my much-loved Louisa!- -In thy orisons fail not to supplicate the pity of Heaven for the unhappy

JULIA HERBERT.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

St. James's Square.

BY heaven, Montague, I am undone!—Curse on my presumption, that led me to hope I saw a dawning partiality in the eyes of Lady Julia!—Curse on my vanity, that subjected me to her scorn!—and ten thousand curses on the day that brought me to the sight of so unparagon'd—and so insensible a beauty!—Oh, for breath to vent a million more of curses! Had you been witness to her treatment of me for the past week,—you must have condemned her haughty conduct;—you must have hated——whom?—Julia Herbert!—Ah! no—you could not have avoided admiring—nay, adoring her as I do.

Whence comes it that she is thus superlatively lovely—thus amiable—thus sensible—and thus cruel?—Is it possible that she is a stranger to the softest of passions?—Indeed, angel as she is, she seems formed for love. And does a person, seen but to captivate, imbibe none of the tender impressions she inspires?—I cannot believe it. Yes she loves—certainly she loves!—but of this I am sure, that it is not one of the many declared lovers who daily throng around her.——I am apt to think my assiduities must have made some way to her heart, were it not prepossessed in favour of a happier man!—Heaven and earth! who can he be?—Ha! Montague, have I not heard, that Lady Julia was once engaged to a gentleman abroad?—Too surely I have;—but my deluded soul would never suffer me to pay any attention to a report so repugnant to my inclination. Now the shocking truth strikes on my imagination;—on my soul, to him her affections are devoted, and my doom of wretchedness is sealed.—May furies blast him!—may destruction involve him—and make him feel pangs as keen—as those I at this moment endure! I must fly directly to Lady Mortimer, and know more of the matter. I am so agitated with contend-
ing

ing passions, I am not myself—Unkind, lovely—infatuated Julia!—Oh Charles!—

* * * * *

I am just come from Dover-street, more composed than when I left my pen.—From Lady Mortimer's lips I am assured that Mr. Lenox was rejected by the most incomparable of women for an indelicacy of behaviour which totally disgusted her.—The whole affair, she tells me, you are acquainted with. If there was room in my breast for further admiration of Lady Julia, her conduct on the occasion would excite it.

You will start at my application to Lady Mortimer for this intelligence;—but cease your wonder when I make known to you she is my *confident*. Ten nights ago, at Lady Pemberton's, I was most unmercifully rallied by the young Lady Pemberton, before the charming Julia, for being met by her, in one of my *ambiguous visits* (as she phrased it) at Mrs. Aubrey's. Some plaguy Demon inspired me to put on an embarrassed air, which I could not, in spite of my endeavours, shake off. She would have persisted in torturing me, aided by Lady Mortimer, (who joined in the latter part of the conversation,) if the amiable Lady Julia had not interfered, and rescued me from them. The surmises which Sophia's exaggerated anecdote must occasion in the breasts of the sisters, I knew would be prejudicial to my hopes; I therefore seized the moment of Lady Mortimer's being separated from the rest, to explain the whole affair to her.—I discovered to her my ardent passion for Julia;—related how, when, and where it commenced;—informed her of my father's views for me, and the manner in which I was circumstanced with him. But, lest I should be thought presumptuous in daring to hope for Lady Julia's hand in my present situation, I extorted a promise from her, not to reveal, till I authorized it, a syllable of what I had uttered, excepting just as much

as she thought was proper to exculpate me in her sister's opinion from the blame that Lady Pemberton's relation must have thrown upon me; and even in *that* respect I begged her to act as appeared to her best for my *interest*; either to speak in my vindication if necessary, or to be silent. She listened to me with pleasure, and assured me, *nothing would make her so happy as to see Lady Julia my wife;—to facilitate which she would spare no pains.*

After that night Lady Julia gave me no room to flatter myself that I was in the least distinguished in her favour from the herd of gentlemen that swell her train, and offer adulation to her charms; nay, she treated me with more distance than any of them. In company (and only then could I see her) she seldom spoke to me;—I could never lead her to her carriage;—always found her conversation addressed to another if I approached her ear:—and yet all this she made coincide so exactly with the strictest politeness, that I had it not in my power, were I ever so well inclined, to arraign her civility.—But there was a sort of *subdued* haughtiness throughout the whole, very perceptible to the penetrating eye of a lover.

On Pemberton's wedding, the amiable Caroline proposed to her to remain, and to Lady Pemberton to leave her in London. It was assented to. My intimacy for many years abroad with Mortimer, gives me a sanction to be frequently in Dover-street: I did not, you may imagine, slacken my visits on the arrival of their beautiful guest;—but she continued to avoid me. I called a few mornings ago, and found her on my entrance putting a letter in her pocket-book:—she appeared confused, and, on examining her countenance, I perceived that she had been in tears.—I was shocked, and checked myself from renewing her distress, and adding to her embarrassment, by enquiring the cause of her uneasiness, which was the first impulse of my soul. What felicity is his, that is worth pearly drops from those starry orbs! She instantly rang to acquaint her sister
that

that I was below, who came down immediately with Miss Edgcumb; and Lady Julia soon after retired under a pretence of writing.

Last night at Almack's I asked the lovely girl to dance: she *thanked me*, but pleaded an engagement to the Duke of Suffolk, who is lately arrived in England. Is there a man on earth, whom I could so soon dread as a rival?—Insinuating—amiable—handsome!—If indeed she looks on him with indifference,—it is beyond a doubt that she has bestowed her heart already. She had scarcely spoken, when he appeared before her, dazzling in his figure,—still more captivating in his address. His eyes paid her the homage that is the tribute of a stricken heart, and due to so enchanting a creature.—He gazed on her with rapture;—he spoke to her in the voice of love:—she answered him with the thrilling tone of a syren.—I could have called him out,—and was ready to dispute such a prize with him;—but Reason for once exerted her dominion over me. They stood up. “Heavens! what a divine couple!” echoed from every part of the room:—they were surrounded by a crowd of admirers, who thought they could never see enough of them.

“Now,” said I to Lady Mortimer, “I am lost!” “Not quite,” she replied. “Be not so diffident. *Who's afraid?*” “Ah, Madam!” “Indeed your apprehensions are ridiculous;—take my word for it, Julia is not so easily caught:—any other woman, I will allow, might give you cause to tremble.” “I have no right to hope any-thing from her;—stranger as she is to my passion, what may I not fear?” “Well, if you are resolved to be uneasy, I cannot help it;—but, surely, I should know the girl's disposition.”

I hovered near the envied Suffolk and his bewitching partner;—I listened to them, and heard him make absolute love to Lady Julia: she answered him with the coolest reserve; checked his ecstasy,—and restored a momentary peace to my bosom. I came home

home satisfied that Suffolk was not the man whom she at that time preferred ;—but altogether as miserable at the idea of some person being the barrier to his and my success, that I little suspected. Lady Julia is thus attached, I am persuaded, though her sister does not believe it.—It cannot be to Lenox—I would sacrifice more than I can mention, to know who the blest fellow is ! Lady Julia did not appear this morning whilst I was in Dover-street :—tormenting girl !—I could almost rail at her !—Would she but afford me a quarter of an hour of her conversation, I should no longer hesitate to reveal to her the situation of my heart, since “to know the worst is some degree of ease.” And I cannot be more wretched than I am, unless I were to see her in the arms of another.—Insupportable thought !—It makes me mad !—Every ray of hope is baffled, as soon as formed, by her shunning me so unaccountably. This very night, I will deposit the same trust in Mortimer’s breast that I have already done in his wife’s : he will advise me how to act, and possibly find an opportunity of indulging me with a conference with the loveliest of women.

On Saturday I shall hope to see you : in the mean while, I am, much yours,

OSMOND.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Dover-Street.

THE agitation of my mind receives no alloy, my best Louisa, by concealing from every breast but yours the circumstance which causes it.—I wear a placid countenance,—I go into public,—I affect a gaiety foreign to my heart ; all accumulate to render the suppression of my grief more poignant ;—and when I am alone, and at liberty to reflect on
my

my wretched infatuation,—the inundation of distress that pours from the recesses of my soul, so long choaked up, overwhelm, and almost destroy me.

Is it not dreadful to be necessitated to use dissimulation?—Is it not a trial to be for ever in the sight of the beloved object who is the origin of it?—an object that I ought to shun,—and would,—could I pursue my inclinations.

Oh merciful Heaven! sure, I am the weakest of creatures, to continue my attachment to a man so unworthy of it!—How much reason has Lady Henrietta to dread a connection with Lord Osmond, who can act so falsely to her, when within a few weeks of their marriage! Had you been a witness, my Louisa, to his behaviour to me ever since the fatal——ah, my misguided pen!—the *fortunate* night, that Sophia so openly discovered the duplicity of his carriage,—you would have lamented the fate of his future bride, and trembled for my danger—I cannot, I dare not recur to past scenes;—to describe the last will be necessary,—and, as it was the most essential one, will be sufficient,

I am just returned from Ranelagh;—Lord Mortimer, his wife, and myself, took Miss Edgcomb up, about eight o'clock, in our way thither.—We had made but two turns about the Rotunda, when Lord Osmond and Sir John Benyon came in, and joined us. I perceived that the too charming Henry sought for an occasion to walk next to me, which I avoided, by seeming accidentally to get in between my sister and Miss Edgcomb; and I continued in that situation till we procured a box to take tea in. Sir John gave his hand to Lady Mortimer, on entering, and placed himself next to her, Lord Osmond presented his to me, and divided us; my brother led Miss Edgcomb, and took his seat between her and me.—Whether the Mortimer's did it through intention, or whether chance directed it, I know not;—but they kept at a distance from me, and engaged the attention, one of
Sir

Sir John, the other of Miss Edgcumb, so effectually, that Lord Osmond had full opportunity to attach his conversation to me without constraint; a circumstance which I had studiously avoided for many days. I was both provoked—and pleased. Good God,—how captivating he appeared!——He fixed his eyes on me attentively for some minutes; then, throwing them down with a diffident air, spoke as follows:

“Whence comes it, Lady Julia, that I have for this age been treated with so much cruelty? I cannot but imagine that some part of my conduct has drawn on me the displeasure of the most adorable of her sex:—what agonies does it excite in my breast!——You are above caprice,—and, I am convinced, have cause for the change of behaviour I so unfortunately experience,——But as you are just,—I am sure, Madam, you will be merciful;—and, when I entreat to be informed of my fault, you will not withhold it longer from my knowledge.——For God’s sake acquaint me in what I have been so miserable as to offend!”

“You amaze me, my Lord!—My behaviour must indeed have been reprehensible, if it taught your Lordship to suppose me offended.——I have no right to arraign you of any fault;—and you jest, when you tell me of *cruelty*,—when you call on me *to be merciful*.——I beg, my Lord, you will not think of amusing your moments thus, at my expense.”

“Nay,—this is too much!——Can it be amusing, Madam, to one who feels more than he can express,—to describe pangs hardly to be borne, the consequence of your *unjust* displeasure?—for, since you will not account for it,—I must be allowed to term it *unjust*. You little know the fidelity, the ardour of that heart you hold in so much contempt.—Believe me, when I swear by all that is sacred, that it is devoted to you by the strongest ties of love.—You only—hear me, Lady Julia,”——“I will not

hear you, Lord Osmond;—you mistake,—sadly mistake the object you throw away so many pains upon.—I am not accustomed, my Lord, to receive the adulation, or listen to the vows, of a man contracted to another.—I take it to be as great an insult to offer them, so circumstanced, to any but the woman you mean to call yours, as if you were lawfully her husband, and to act that part.”

“*Contracted to another!*—By heaven, Madam, I am as free from engagements with any”——

“You have often said so, my Lord;—the truth you best know yourself;—but let me insist that you address *me* no farther on this topick;—there is no end to be answered by it;—and it must inevitably hurt you in my opinion. May you have every happiness I wish you, whether married, or unconnected!—Your friendship will give me pleasure.”

“I see, Lady Julia, that you have fixed my unhappy doom:—but, after all my protestations that my hand is absolutely free,—that there is not a woman in the world I love besides yourself,—may I not be credited?—My father indeed wishes”—“No more, my Lord, I beg!——an explanation is unnecessary——If you are engaged, sure there is no crime in it!——nor in your chusing to conceal it, as long as you do not deceive any-one into an error that may make them unhappy by your ambiguity.—Be persuaded that it is a matter in which I have no curiosity:—Lady Henrietta is a girl of worth;—she is spoken of exceedingly well; and, if you marry her, your choice will be applauded.—I desire to remain ignorant of your situation respecting her;—I am by no means interested in it, further than to wish your felicity complete!”

“Too plainly, Madam, do you convince me of your contempt!—Too plainly am I made acquainted with your indifference about what concerns me!—Yet, rejected,---despised as I am,—I must presume to implore one favour of you:—think it not impertinent;—and Oh! for pity’s sake, exert your humanity, and grant it through mere compassion!”

“What

"What is it, my Lord?"

"You must condescend to promise first,---that it shall not be refused:—as a man of honour I swear, if you will repose in me the generous confidence I ask, no ill consequences shall accrue from it.—To a despairing wretch, Madam,—abandoned to destruction, afford the small relief I beg.—As a *friend*,—if it must be so, I implore it;—it is but to answer faithfully a single question."

"I will, my Lord, comply with the entreaty of a *friend*: what have you to demand?"

"On your honour, you will be sincere."

"Sincerity is my characteristic:—depend upon it."

"Ah, divine Julia!—before I make the awful interrogatory,—be prepared not to call me insolent. Is not your heart engaged to some happier man?"

"Your question is indeed a strange, and rather an *out-of-the-way* one;—but my word is passed. No, upon my honour, my Lord:—the man does not exist to whose merit I am more sensible,—or whom I feel more for, than I do for you.—Still, you remember what I have said: if you again repeat this subject to me, I will never forgive it."—"Great God!—what a destiny is mine!—Can no consideration plead in that (to all but me) gentle bosom?—Your heart at your own disposal,—why may not I offer myself a candidate for it?—Are Budenall, Seymour, and a hundred others, under the same restriction?—They love not with the ardour, the constancy that I do.—I have undergone a probation of three years;—absent from you almost the whole time;—your image never left me:—the first moment my ravished eyes beheld you, decided you the arbitress of my fate;—absolutely unknown to me, I ceased not to idolize the most charming woman in the universe:—my unwearied assiduity to discover you,—the fervency with which"——"Now, my Lord, you speak in mysteries far above my comprehension, and it is time to have done with the to-

pic.—Mr. Montague,” who just then entered the box, “shall I give you some tea?”

The conversation became general whilst we were seated:—my Lord Osmond, indeed, did not join in it;—he looked shocked,—agitated,—and as unhappy as—I felt. Can men be really such dissemblers, my Louisa!—Oh! wherefore should this too charming creature take such trouble to wound my peace!—Whether or no he loves Henrietta, is what I cannot determine. The world says he is to marry her very shortly;—my brother’s wife saw enough to convince her, that it is his intention to do so;—and should I not act dishonourably and ridiculously to allow of his addresses?—The question answers itself.

I should be blessed far beyond the limits of a mortal, was the fascinating Henry destitute of title and fortune, and in that situation to chuse me the partner of his heart. To be banished for ever to the deserts of Lybia, or to any other desolate place, with such a husband, could be no punishment, nor excite the least horror in my breast.—But he will never—ah! never be mine;—and I have made up my mind to endure wretchedness.

Immediately as we quitted the box, I missed Lord Osmond, and saw him no more. I leave you to judge how well I relished the scene of *amusement* I was engaged in after his departure. Lord Mortimer, I believe, guessed that something made me uneasy; for he asked me several times, *why I looked dejected, and was so serious?* I have rather an unfortunate countenance at discovering the emotions of my heart, as my brother says; though I have of late taught it a little to dissemble.—It is full time to take some rest; so adieu, my Louisa.

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Tuesday Afternoon.

This racketting life is not calculated to make me very healthy:—I am actually more indisposed than ever

ever I remember to have been in my life ; but, as Imogen says,

“ So sick I am not, yet I am not well,
But not so citizen a wanton, as
To seem to die, ere sick : ” —

therefore I shall not make Caroline uneasy by complaining : — indeed I know not what to complain of, — and should be puzzled for an answer, if asked where my disorder lay. We are to remain peaceably at home till to-morrow evening ; a longer spell of rest than I have had for some time. But is it not astonishing, that I should be so much disturbed by the same fatigue that Lady Mortimer goes through without feeling ? — My constitution is by no means more delicate than hers : — her peace of mind receives no wounds ; — it is always free from agitation, and she has better spirits to support the rota of dissipation she enters into with such avidity. Alas, my Louisa ! why is it not my case ? — The eternal anxiety I labour under, unnerves me, and renders me incapable of enduring corporal inconveniencies : — even at this moment what tortures wring my heart, at not having seen or heard of Lord Osmond since last night ! — Foolish — inconsistent, fond girl ! — would to Heaven thou hadst never seen him !

* * * * *

Tuesday, Nine o'clock.

How intolerably weak ! — But am I for ever to entertain you with the imbecillity of my heart ? — It is in vain to direct my pen to any other subject at present : I am immediately under the despotism of folly and error : — Lord Osmond is below ; and my sister has sent Mournies to inform me of it. — I must go down ; — my knees tremble — Ah, Louisa ! pity the most oppressed bosom in the world !

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* * * * * K 3 *Thursday*

Thursday Morning.

I did not chuse to play last night at Lady Percival's assembly:—after my sister was seated at cards, Miss Edgcumb and I went into the room where the company entered, and placed ourselves near the door, that we might see them come in; Lord Osmond followed us. After some time Mrs. Aubrey and her niece was announced. I did not look at my Lord from motives of delicacy. They curtsied to us in passing;—he slightly bowed, and continued speaking to me of Venice. I was at liberty to observe Henrietta's countenance, as she did not remove for half an hour to any great distance from us.—Her eyes were constantly on her too fickle Henry: at last she followed her aunt to another apartment;—very soon after Lord Osmond left us, and disappeared.——Good heaven!—how I suffered at the idea of his then addressing her in a language he is so thoroughly a master of,—and which she may listen to, and answer him in without a fault!——I had not a doubt but he pursued her to atone for the little notice he had taken of her when she was in our view. The pen of a Cicero could not convey to you the pain these ideas excited in my breast; but I acquired deceit enough for a while to seem composed. “I wonder where Lord Osmond is gone, Julia!” “Are you uneasy, my dear, about Lord Osmond?” “Poh! not I indeed.” —“Then, my good Emily, I may venture to remind you that Lady Henrietta Marchmont is in one of those rooms;—and now do you wonder?” “Oh, no, I had forgot.” Her ready coincidence with my conjecture, that they were together,—gave me a new pang. So liable am I to the most painful of all sensibilities! The Duke of Suffolk took the seat that had been just vacated by a more irresistible object: he made me many complaints *of the coolness with which I regarded his passion; begged I would not be deaf to his professions, or think them insincere.* He ended not here, but my attention did;—for I was ignorant

ignorant (though he had my ear) of every thing else he said, so engaged was I in looking for the Marquis's return, and fancying, at a distance, every man I saw of his height, with a coloured coat similar to the one he wore, to be him.—The illusion of my senses ran to an extreme indeed, when, amongst the many my erring eyes raised to a resemblance of him, appeared some very awkward figures, that, as they drew near, shocked me for my comparison. The handsomest man there, or I believe in Europe, thought like Lord Osmond, must be flattered. I was at last drawn from my reverie, (if it may be called one,) by the alarm I received in hearing the Duke beg my permission to offer proposals to my mother and Lord Pemberton:—the thing upon earth I most dreaded, from a conviction that I should not be allowed by either of them to refuse such a man. A chilliness came over me;—he looked at me with tenderness, and impatient for my answer.—For a few minutes I could make him none;—my teeth chattered,—I shuddered.—At last I cried, “For God’s sake—if your Grace has the sentiments of humanity you are proclaimed to possess—if, my Lord, you regard the unhappy object”—My eyes grew dim!—I could only utter, “I am very ill—where is Caroline?—My sister!”—and I fainted on Miss Edgcumb’s shoulder. I was restored by volatiles; but what was my confusion at seeing such a croud around me, the Duke standing on one side, bending over my chair, and Lord Osmond before me, with both my hands in his. I withdrew them instantly, and whispered Caroline to let us depart. On looking up, I saw Lady Henrietta observing me with scrutiny, and laughing heartily with her aunt. How inhuman she appeared! “Mind her not, my love,” cried Miss Edgcumb, who was equally shocked at her mirth. “The mere effect of envy!—Ill as you are at this moment, she would give worlds to wear your form, and exchange places with you.” “Truth

by heaven!" exclaimed a gentleman who was near, and whom I am unacquainted with. Lady Henrietta turned the colour of scarlet; her features swelled with passion. She advanced towards Miss Edgcumb, and was about to make her some reply, when her aunt spoke low, and led her off.—What a wife for Osmond!—"A cursed fool!" cried the Duke, and offered his hand to lead me to the carriage, which one of the servants pronounced ready: at the same instant Lord Osmond presented his.—I was distressed which to accept, and about to obey the impulse of my inclination, when I recollected, that, if I did so, I should probably give my rival some further uneasiness, and doubted not but she was chagrined sufficiently at her lover's assiduity about me a few minutes before. I therefore suffered the Duke to be my escort; in consequence of which, I observed several angry looks flash upon him from my Lord Osmond's eyes. He followed me to the stairs, and, as I stopped to give Lady Mortimer the *pas*, whispered, "Ah, Lady Julia! how miserable have I been!—I did not think so much tyranny dwelt in your soul!" He waited not for my answer, but folded his arms and returned to the apartment I had quitted; and probably joined his indelicate mistress in laughing at an accident, that by her behaviour she must have supposed absolute affectation. His duplicity of conduct draws on him my contempt;—would I could say my aversion!—I have forbidden him to address me on a certain subject;—in positive terms forbidden it, on pain of my lasting displeasure.—I am convinced, from every authority, that he is to become soon the husband of Lady Henrietta.—I have mentioned this before,—but I am still further assured of it;—and notwithstanding,—when he is absent I am wretched in the highest extreme.—At the sound of a carriage stopping at the door, my heart palpitates:—if he does not appear, I am cruelly disappointed; if he enters, my spirits sink, and I wish him gone;—I fly

—I fly the room, and fancy I should regain my former quiet, was I never to see him more.

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Lady Mortimer was miserable at my indisposition, —and was urgent to send for a physician.—I, who never was ill enough to be in the hands of one, became alarmed at the mention;—and entreated she would at least wait till morning, and, in case I was not quite well, promised to comply then with her desire. When Lord Mortimer (who had been at Boodle's) came home, and heard of my unlucky fainting, he seemed terrified, and imputed it to the right cause, (though I would not allow it, lest Caroline should reproach herself as being instrumental to it). He said, *he was convinced I suffered from going out so much, and dancing so incessantly.* My sister answered, *she was afraid he spoke justly, and that we must be more domestic for some days.* I can assure you this resolution of hers does not displease me;—though I am perfectly well at present.

I received a letter yesterday from my mother;—they are all joy and happiness in Hertfordshire. On Tuesday the whole party are to be in London. My brother and his wife are to be Lady Pemberton's guests in Portman Square, as their house in Grafton-street is not quite ready for their reception. At the end of ten days we all go down to Lord Mortimer's at Windsor for two months:—there is to be every sort of amusement instituted there, to entertain us, plays, masks, balls, concerts, &c. &c. &c. Then we are to ramble about, first to my brother's in Hertfordshire, next to my uncle's in Kent, and I suppose finish our summer at my mother's in Hampshire. I dare answer that we shall be so happy as to have you and Sir Charles with us in a short time after our residence at Windsor. Heaven grant it!—I did hope we should embrace in London first;—but you keep Montague so long

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dangling

dangling after you as a lover, that you have crushed the prospects I had raised.—I am summoned below. This impertinent indisposition brings many who call themselves my friends, to enquire after me. Observe that denomination is confined entirely to the male sex;—my own are contented with the *etiquette* of *sending* to know how I do. Lady Henrietta has not forgotten that piece of ceremony, I assure you.—What a burlesque to keep up such a mere appearance!

* * * * *

Sunday Noon.

You think me to blame, dear Louisa, in not mentioning how Emily Edgcumb bore my brother's marriage.—Why, well—very well: her good sense operated properly on the occasion. I believe the bare idea of yielding him to another, was at first worse than death;—but by degrees she reconciled herself to her fate, knowing that inevitable evils must be submitted to:—and, as reason never refuses its aid when sincerely invoked, it has so far assisted her, that she sees and talks of Pemberton and Sophia with composure and esteem. What an example for me!—Why cannot I follow it?—I have some reason to hope, that in a little while Sir James Westbrook's assiduity will make him, what my brother was to her,—very dear.—How now, Mournies?

“A gentleman begs to see your Ladyship.”

“*A gentleman begs to see me!*—Who is this gentleman?”

“Sir Charles Montague.”

“*Sir Charles Montague!*—I am impatient to see him!”

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Yes indeed I am delighted at this long-wished-for pleasure; yet I could almost reproach you for not making him the bearer of a letter:—but I recollect;
the

—the moments prior to your parting were of too much importance to have been devoted out of his presence.—I no longer blame you. He tells me that he left you well. For my sake, Louisa, expedite his and your happiness, and let me partake of felicity in the secondary instance, by thinking that you enjoy it in the fullest extent.

Sir Charles is to meet his friend here at dinner. I must repair to my toilette—not with any design against *him*, believe me: and, having made this a *tolerable*, or rather *intolerable* long letter, conclude myself

Your ever faithful

JULIA HERBERT.

N. B. A letter, in answer to this, from Lady Louisa Sydney, is omitted as unnecessary; and another also from Lady Julia Herbert, before she left London, for the same reason.

To Sir CHARLES MONTAGUE.

St. James's-Square.

I REGRET incessantly, my dear Montague, your sudden departure from town, and the melancholy event that called you from it. A heart excellent as yours must sustain greater grief at the imminent danger of your worthy uncle, than any joy one of our libertine young men of fashion would feel on their near possession of so noble a fortune as you will inherit by the calamity that threatens you. To be abruptly summoned to attend him on so awful and unexpected an occasion, was doubly shocking! This day's post will bring me a letter from you, I trust, to say that he is out of danger.

The latter end of next week, I go down by invitation to Mortimer's for a fortnight or three weeks. The Herbert's, you know, are there;—I think

think they left London the day before you quitted it. I am too sensibly affected with your present affliction to bend my thoughts on any other subject, whilst addressing you. To tell you they are *always* occupied by your present distress, would be insincere,—there is *one*, and only one, who shares them with you; but I sympathize in your sorrow as much as man can do.—It is too painful a subject to detain my pen longer on, since, if the worst I dread has happened to my Lord Beaumont, a melancholy letter can afford you no consolation; and if (as I sincerely hope) he is better, it will only carry you back to the dreadful reflections you experienced, when you imagined him near his last hour. Adieu then, dear Charles! and believe me, in every situation,

Your faithful and affectionate

OSMOND.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Windsor.

WE arrived here this day se'nnight, and are preparing for the reception of much company;—much indeed will it take to fill this noble mansion, not an apartment of which is to be unoccupied in a few days. The recollection of the blessed moment I passed here not many months ago, endears the place to me:—not a room—not a walk—not a ride in or about it, is there, that has not witnessed some happy scene, which are all brought back to “my mind’s eye” with accumulated charms, from being *now* beyond my reach. Ah, Osmond! origin of all my pleasure and misery!—but for you, the shades of Windsor would never have been so delightful;—but for you, I could now wander thro’ them with as much gaiety of heart as I was wont to feel in traversing the woods of Hampshire or Hertford!—alike indifferent to all places.

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When I parted from him, Louisa, I behaved with fortitude;—I evaded the opportunities he sought of speaking to me:—but when he bid us adieu—when I saw the door shut him out,—and heard the carriage roll off,—convinced that I had seen him for the last time an unmarried man,—judge—Oh, my Louisa! judge what I endured! I flew to my closet;—I was almost delirious;—I applied to *him*, who alone could give me power to support so severe a trial—On my knees I preferred the request;—and it was granted. I returned to the drawing-room composed:—I played a rubber of whist; it attracted my attention out of *myself*: I was not once accused by my partner of heedlessness to the game; a reproof I never before failed of incurring. Was there not some supernatural assistance that sheltered me from the form of Osmond at the time?—Ah! would to heaven at this moment, it would lend its benevolent aid,—and, pouring in the balm of insensibility to my soul, save me from the torturing remembrance of the blessed days I have known, which “are gone, never—ah never! to return.” Sweet oblivion! to you I bend;—you I implore to relieve a poor suffering wretch!—Put forth your lenient hand, and scatter on the most faithful votary you ever heard utter a wish for your dominion—the power of forgetfulness! Alas, my Louisa! how I wander from my subject!—That tranquillity I *now* invoke, continued the whole evening. I cannot say it was a pleasant one, (though a heaven to what I suffered prior to its visit,) for I felt like a person in a state of stupefaction: I mechanically did every thing that I was bid;—listened, and answered properly;—but had no senses that seemed to originate from *myself*. I believed a poniard through my heart would have given me no pain—I got above sufferings of any kind.

The next morning,—my situation dwindled to mere mortality:—with the day my agonies returned,

and

—and brought in the strongest light to view all my miseries.—About eleven o'clock we left town.

To complete the measure of my woes,—the Duke of Suffolk has proposed to my mother and Lord Pemberton for my hand:—they are as strenuous for the match as I expected. Lady Pemberton came into my closet two mornings ago, and acquainted me with his generous offers.—I implored my mother to let me hear no more of him.—She looked grave: “What, Julia!”—“I beseech you, Madam, to oblige me—On my knees I beg the Duke may be instantly informed that I can never love him,—that he must never again address me on” —“Julia you astonish me inexpressibly!”—“If my dear mother consults the happiness of her child;—if, Madam, I deserve the indulgence I always experience from you—you will immediately dismiss my Lord Duke’s pretensions.”—“I do consult my Julia’s happiness;—she is every way deserving of my indulgence;—but indeed I cannot so hastily impart your present sentiments to his Grace,—sentiments that must be given up, after allowing your reason to ponder on the advantages that will attend such an alliance:—nay, I will be candid;—I am in some doubt whether I can *ever* prevail on myself to suffer your refusal of his addresses, unless you allege to me a sufficient motive why I should do so; as I shall be criminal in my own opinion, if I permit you to trifle away your felicity thus unaccountably.—You are satisfied, Julia, that I am not one of the number who imagine happiness centers in a high title, or monstrous fortune; I proved *that*, when I consented to Mr. Lenox’s overtures, who, at the death of his father, will possess scarcely four thousand a year: his worth was my principal object, and made me zealous for the match. You never loved him enough, that his image should steel your heart against a second attachment. In a few days after the affair was broken off, you were as gay as ever;—I saw no traces of anxiety concealed under
your

your behaviour.—Lord Seymour proposed ;—he was instantly rejected.—Lord Budenall shared the same fate.—The Count de Belfield, a man of the first distinction at the court of —, besought your hand ;—you would not hear his name mentioned ;—you were indulged in all your caprice, and not a question asked, why one of these men (each of them a desirable object) should not call you his.—Of late, you appear distressed ;—you have no goût for amusements ;—you fly as much as possible society ;—you conceal your grief.—Well !—I will not press to know what it is ; this is foreign to my subject.—The Duke of Suffolk, of all the young men I ever beheld, or was acquainted with,”—(ah Louisa ! did not my mother make a mental reservation of *one* ? Undoubtedly !)—“is certainly most calculated for you. Is he not amiable, polite, and sensible ? Answer me, Julia.” “I believe, my Lady, he is all that you say :—but, alas ! I am unable to do justice to his merit ;—though I admire, I cannot love the Duke.” “I have no fear of your remaining long insensible to so agreeable a person, if you will but consent to let him plead for himself. My God, what fault can you offer against Suffolk !—Beware, Julia, of suffering perverseness to make its way into your disposition.—Oblige me so far as to allow the Duke to pay us a visit at Windsor.” “Ah, my mother !—I perceive that I am destined to wretchedness ;—but be it so,—dispose of me, Madam as you please ;—I will, at your command, become the wife of Suffolk—and, oh, merciful God !—if that miserable fate awaits me,—let me not endure it long !” “No, Julia, you shall not complain of your mother’s forcing your inclinations !—Heaven forbid !—but promise me to behold the Duke with cheerfulness.—If, after giving him an opportunity of attaching you to him, your disgust continues invincible, we must then adopt measures agreeable to your will.—Yet, if you *can* conquer your dislike, let me assure you, that nothing can afford me so much

much delight, as to see a union take place between you and him."—My tears prevented my thanking her Ladyship, and I withdrew.

Several times during this conversation I endeavoured to summon up courage enough to tell Lady Pemberton how unhappily and improperly my heart was already bestowed;—but even to the best of mothers I was too great a coward to give the unfortunate secret utterance.—My brother was less gentle on the same topic that had so much distressed me with Lady Pemberton, than ever he was in his life. It is evident that this dreadful attachment will deprive me of the affection of all my friends. The Duke of Suffolk is expected down amongst a concourse of guests in a few days hence. Lord Osmond is not one of them, I am convinced;—his name is scarcely ever mentioned.—Ah, my God! I shall see him no more till he is married—Louisa, withhold your sympathy—I love you too well to desire that you should participate of my uneasiness.

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Sunday Evening.

I do not think I told you that Miss Edgcumb is with us:—you know not what an amiable engaging girl she is. This morning she followed me on the terrace next the river, where I was walking: she begged me to permit her to join me; I readily assented. She laid her arm within mine. "I believe, Julia, something hangs upon your spirits!—You appear more melancholy than usual.—Indeed I observed an alteration in you in London; but the cause I assigned for it was, the fatigue that must consequently ensue from the hurrying life you led for the last three or four months of your residence there.—I flattered myself, when you came into the country, and was restored to rest, you would of course be restored to vivacity." "And so I shall, dear Emily." "Then why do I not find at least a beginning?"

ning?—It is full time for it!—I hope, dear Lady Julia, nothing has induced your thoughts to cross the Channel;—forgive me,—but I almost fear”——

“Fear nothing of the sort, my sweet friend!—Mr. Lenox has no interest in my thoughts:—whole days pass by, without once bringing him back to my memory.” “Come, if you are generous, you shall treat me with confidence;—for I will reveal an affair to you, that I would hardly trust myself with the knowledge of, for a long while.” “Not with an expectation of my repaying the secret, my amiable Emily;—I am a bankrupt,—I have no”——

“No matter, you shall hear me;”—and she unfolded to me the passion for my brother, with which her gentle bosom had been oppressed for near two years;—but calling reason to her aid, it shewed her the impossibility of his being hers,—and instructed her to vanquish the merciless tormentor that imbittered her hours. She owned to me, *that she felt for Sir James Westorook the tenderest sentiments; who, on his first addressing her, (which happened two months ago,) informed her, that he offered her a heart just weaned from a strong attachment, which would have continued during his existence, had he not combatted with his inclinations by force,—and representing to himself, that the object would never return it. He added, he could not so well have succeeded in his attempt, had not his good fortune introduced him to an intimacy with her, which effectually accomplished the work he had undertaken: that, as a man of honour he thought this avowal necessary, and, if she desired it, would give up the Lady’s name; but confessed he had rather (for a time) be excused doing that. I admired her good sense; congratulated myself on the near acquisition of so charming a relation; assured her of the high opinion we all entertained of Sir James’s worth; and thanked her for the proof she had given me of her friendship.—But I did not dare to expose to her my infatuation: certainly there was illiberality of sentiment in my silence!—I have so long*

“backward

"backward trod those paths I sought to shun," and am so habituated to act wrong, that I can only now cast a despairing sigh on every fresh error I commit.

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Sunday Night, Eleven.

So!—every incident that can possibly, does happen to give new perturbation to my mind. At supper, my brother said, *he supposed that six weeks more would add Lord Osmond to the list of married men.* My sister Caroline contradicted him, and declared, *she was very sure, that, when Osmond did marry, it would not be Lady Henrietta:—that it was very odd people should run away with such a notion!—To her certain knowledge, my Lord was resolved not to sacrifice his happiness to accumulate greater riches than he possessed.* Lord Pemberton answered, *that, since she was so positive, he would not presume to dispute with her;—else he would aver, that the Duke of Westmorland told him, two days after his return from Hertfordshire, that his son would very shortly, he expected, follow his example in becoming a Benedic.* He turned to me: "Julia, you had many conferences with the Marquis, and I dare believe you are informed of his intentions; if you may divulge them, tell what they are." "Indeed, my Lord, I am ignorance itself of them;—but, if I may judge from what every-one says, your Lordship's conjectures are right;—I believe Lady Mortimer thinks too favourably of Lord Osmond."

"You are a wrong person to apply to in this case," cried Caroline: "you are prejudiced against the Marquis; therefore" — "*Prejudiced against him!*" repeated my brother. "*He has given us no cause—why should she be prejudiced?*" "Nay, I know not; but I believe she is against your whole sex."—Lord Mortimer immediately changed the conversation, which in my heart I sincerely thanked him for. He spoke of a superb pavilion he had erected

erected to serve for a theatre, where he means to have plays enacted as soon as his visitors arrive. He intends to cast parts amongst such of them as will like the proposition ; and entreated we would accompany him to-morrow to see whether we approve of the building and decorations.

When we retired for the night, Lady Mortimer followed me to my apartment ; and, after giving full scope to her vivacity on different topics for some time, sent Mournies out on an errand to her woman. She thus began :

“ Julia, it is necessary you should know that it is agreed you are to appear in the first play that will be represented.” I supposed her in jest, and humoured her. “ Pray what character is allotted me ? ” “ Statira.” “ Very well adapted to my disposition !—I can have no objection”—“ *Objection!* no certainly ;—if you had,—it would directly subside, when informed who your Alexander is to be.” “ Pray tell me !”—“ I do not believe I *will* so readily as you expect ;—yet I pity your impatience !—Well, suppose I say Budenall.”

“ I will not have him.” “ Seymour ! ” “ Nor him.”

“ You shall not then ;—but you must not be so laconic when I name the soft, insinuating, charming Suffolk :—he will become the hero admirably !—Oh, how he will glory in appearing as conqueror of the world, conquered by you !—What spirit will be seen in his performance ! ”

“ Cruel, —inhuman Caroline !—Were you in my situation, should I thus sport with your distress ? ” “ What, refuse to be Suffolk’s Statira ?—Amazing !—Well, if you are so barbarous to *him*,—my poor friend—the man you despise and hate the most in the world,—the handsome—the graceful—the elegant Osmond, spite of his bewitching address, can stand no chance of being nominated to the character.”—I felt my face glow,—I sat down. “ You reject him also, Julia, no doubt !

doubt!" I have no intention, sister, of undertaking the part:—I have no abilities for it;"—and, if I had, Statira is the one of all others I would last appear in—But, was I obliged to perform it (I speak of a thing that can never happen), I should prefer playing with Lord Osmond to either of the three you have mentioned: they have seriously addressed me,—and, as I do not mean to accept of Lord Bundenall,—Lord Seymour,—or the Duke of Suffolk, it would be highly improper to give them any encouragement:—I look upon Lord Osmond as a married man,—and that makes an essential difference."

"Then you would prefer shewing the Marquis a predilection, my sweet girl!" "As Lord Osmond cannot be mine, sister, the world"——"And why may he not be yours, my dear?—What obstacle can prevent it, if you but consent to his happiness?"

"Dear Lady Mortimer, how you speak?—What my brother affirmed a few hours ago is not to be doubted;—he is soon to become the husband of Lady Henrietta:—Osmond deceives you if he denies it.—But supposing, after an engagement with her, he should have levity enough to declare a passion for me,—would you not despise him for it, Caroline?—Could you think him a man of honour?"

"No certainly, if he was engaged:—but, my dear Julia, do not entertain that idea,—depend upon it, he is as free from any ties to Henrietta, as I am at this moment bound by the most solemn to my excellent Lord Mortimer."

"On what proof, my Caroline, do you ground this assertion? She paused

—"On his assurances." "Oh, my sister! "*Men's*

vows are womens traitors." Do not, my dear Lady Mortimer, place so unlimited a confidence in what Lord Osmond says;—he has frequently attempted to impose in the same manner on my credulity.—Believe me, from all I have heard of him, from what I have seen, he is a compound of deceit—But what then?—It concerns not you—or me, Caroline: so let us say no more of him."—Mournies returned,

and

and my sister took her leave, as I will of you, my Louisa, for the night.

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Monday Noon.

Upon reflection, I wish I had told Caroline what passed between the Marquis and me at Ranelagh. She looks on him in a favourable light,—and would put a less censorious interpretation on his behaviour, than my mother, Lord Pemberton, or Almeria, would do, were I to inform them of it.—I cannot bear to lower him in their opinions; and, though I can freely condemn him myself, it would hurt me in the highest degree to hear any-one else do so.

We have been to see Lord Mortimer's magnificent structure;—it is really a noble building, admirably adapted for the purpose he intends it.—He has had this scheme of amusement in view these two years past it seems; in which time people have been constantly employed, and have now completely finished the pavilion, as they call it, entirely to the satisfaction of all who behold it. I never aim at descriptions of this sort; therefore, will only tell you, that, like the Opera-house, it can be occasionally thrown into a number of beautiful apartments;—otherwise it is a very neat theatre, calculated for the advantage of the performers, and the convenience of the audience: it is situated on one side of my Lord's park, and is about two miles from the house. Mortimer is busy in ordering and disposing of necessary furniture in the dressing-rooms and green-room:—proper persons are already arrived to superintend, and give directions about dresses, which are not to be entirely compleated till each gentleman and lady fix on their characters, and they can be made to fit exactly. They are now employed in preparing the following: the dress of Elizabeth, in the Earl of Warwick, for Sophia; Margaret's of Anjou for Almeria, and Warwick's for my

my brother. It will be the first play represented: the next I believe is to be the Provoked Husband. Lord Mortimer will do *justice* to Lord Townley. We tell Caroline it suits him better than any that could have been thought of; for he will walk in his own line:—but to render the thing complete, she must certainly do Lady Townley. We seldom gain any good by playing with her at her own weapons; she soon silenced us:—however, she declares *off* the part; for though she knows she could merit great applause by performing it, yet there is, she allows, too great a similarity in her own character and that of the dissipated fine woman's of quality,—to undertake it; and she has no inclination to be called Lady Townley for life. I am as ignorant as you are, how the other parts of each play will be filled, and must remain so, till the expected guests assemble. I am very *wary*, lest they should *take me in*;—but I am resolved not to be a performer, unless my mother absolutely insists upon it;—and that I think she will not be unkind enough to do.—I see a carriage on one side the lawn:—whose is it I wonder!—Lord and Lady Percival's liveries. —They are come, my Louisa, and I must hasten to welcome them:—they are, no doubt, replete with news from London. Adieu!

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Monday Night, Twelve o'Clock.

The evening was insupportably hot,—and for the benefit of the air I strolled out:—they were all amusing themselves differently; some playing at cards,—others in an adjoining room on musical instruments;—the rest were engaged in conversation, (for a good deal of company came to dinner,) and I, fearful of interrupting any person, retired alone. I walked into a wilderness on the south side of the park, which is a heavenly spot;—the hand of Nature has been lavish to it beyond expression in her donations, and, with

with the assistance of art, has rendered it perfectly a paradise: the eye is delighted; every zephyr wafts sweets equal to those breathed in Arabia Felix;--- the melody of birds forms more enchanting harmony, than we are invited to hear, in a high-arched resplendent dome, from the voices of our most capital singers. The evening was beautiful, and I continued my walk through the labyrinth upwards of *two* hours.

“There was room for meditation even to Madness, till the mind burst with thinking.”

I grew tired, and seated myself in an alcove: a few obtrusive tears had strayed down my cheeks, which I was wiping away when Lord Mortimer suddenly entered---He started, and exclaimed,

“Ha, Julia!—How is this?—Good heaven! what discomposes you thus?—Speak, I beseech you---So unhappy, my sister!” “No, my Lord!---Why should I?---I beg---pray take no notice of this weakness---I cannot account”——“Oh!---this must be accounted for.” He sat by me, and took my hand.

“Inform me, my dear Julia, what occasions your distress;—impart it to the sympathizing breast of friendship.—If it can be removed (and surely it might), you shall find my assiduity unwearied to effect it:—do not deny me your confidence.” My tears gushed forth a-fresh;—I could not speak.

“Is it the idea of your mother’s and Pemberton’s urging you to marry Suffolk?—Be at rest; they will not persuade you against your inclinations.—No,—you are not destined for Suffolk.—Ah, that I could impute these tears to another cause!—How soon should I dry them!”

“What do you mean, my Lord?”

“You shall know;—but you must be very candid with me—no evasions to a question I first shall ask:—will you promise this?”

“It

"It is but of late my sincerity has been ever doubted;—what have I done to be so sunk in your opinion, my Lord?"

"No one thinks more highly of you, my Julia, than I do;—yet for reasons you may hold good, it is not improbable (without laying the slightest reproach on you), to suppose you might use a little reserve:—but in this case you must promise to banish it entirely, before you are entrusted with a secret that concerns you." His sensible eyes seemed to penetrate my thoughts;—I imagined he looked severely on me.

"My God! why am I to be terrified thus?—What mystery is there that needs this prelude?—My heart cannot long bear the conflicts it has of late suffered, and still endures.—Yes, my Lord, I will answer with truth whatever you propose to me, be the consequences what they may;—I am indifferent to them,—or what becomes of the ill-fated Julia." He embraced me tenderly.

"You are unkind, my sister—Think you I come to alarm—or take an improper advantage of the confidence I solicit?—No, Julia;—I have no motive for claiming your sincerity, but from the hope of relieving the distress which seems to overwhelm you.—If you suppose it beyond the reach of my endeavours or abilities to accomplish,—if it gives you pain to reveal the secret to a very faithful bosom,—be silent:—I will not tear it from you;—nor shall even Caroline know that I have the mortification of suspecting you to be unhappy.—Dry your eyes:—what has already passed in this short time shall from henceforward be mentioned no more."

"Forgive me, my dearest brother,—my best friend!—I would rather die than offend you—Your goodness strikes on my soul, and I am all acknowledgment for it.—Pardon my petulancy, and demand what questions you please;—I will be truth itself."

"Then tell me why you so positively refused the offer of Osmond's heart!" "Ah, my Lord!—

did

did you over-hear the"—"I heard not a syllable but from himself, the day after his declaration to you at Ranelagh; when, in agonies not to be described, he related to me the cruel return you made to his ardent professions. Never was there a couple created, since the time of our first parents, so formed for each other as Julia Herbert and Lord Osmond:—I think it wonderful that you can find *one* objection to him. Good heaven! how plainly does it demonstrate, that erring mortals seldom fail to dash from their lips the cup of happiness presented to them!—Where, my sister, will you again behold one to compare with the amiable Osmond?"

"*Take him but for all in all,*"—nowhere my Lord;—his equal in many great virtues,—in every charm, does not exist.—Ah! my God, am I insensible to them!—You, who know every sentiment,—every movement of my heart, can best judge how much it is devoted to him!—These tears you behold, my brother, are witnesses of the interest I take in the fate of Osmond;—my life is so embittered by my unhappy attachment, that I look forward with impatience to the time that will rid me of the burden."

"You shall not thus make yourself wretched.—Admitting you acted rashly, in dismissing him inconsiderately, all may yet be well;—my Lord will again supplicate your pity, I dare aver, and"——

"Again be rejected with scorn and indignation."——

"Why how the devil!—You blow hot and cold in the same breath!—What am I to understand by all this?"

"I should hold it, as I did that night at Ranelagh, the greatest insolence to address me, when he is undoubtedly the property of another. At the moment he is ordering preparations for his marriage with Lady Henrietta Marchmont, to presume to make me the object of a licentious passion!—I cannot reflect on it with patience.——His behaviour to his *real* mistress, which plainly evinces his infidelity, and

his desire of deceiving me, are great, but, I am convinced, the only blemishes in his character;—and where is that mortal upon earth who is perfect?—No, we have all something to be forgiven for.—Miserable as I am on his account, yet I can pity my rival:—Lord Osmond loves her not; in that case what a situation will hers be?”

“Good God, Julia,—how you injure Osmond! *Make you the object of a licentious passion?*—What an error!—Hark!—I am called—Pemberton’s voice—I have not time to say more than this, to-morrow morning early, I will entreat my wife to find an opportunity of conversing with you alone: she shall set your doubts of my friend at rest, by informing you of what he told us both at different times concerning yourself and the Lady you have just mentioned;—the manner in which he is situated. I would chuse you should receive this intelligence from her.—Farewel! be composed—and all will turn out to your satisfaction.”—By this time Lord Pemberton appeared in sight: he flew to him, and turned his steps another way, to prevent his discovering the traces of the tears that I believe remained very visibly on my countenance.

What will to-morrow produce!—To-morrow:—This morning I mean, for it is near two o’clock.—I am lost in expectation—in doubt—and hope.—Adieu, my dear Louisa.

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N. B. In the few following pages some repetitions are obliged to be made; but, as they give a more connected detail, and of course let the reader better into the story, they may not be found tedious.

* * * * *

Monday Noon.

No more do I chaunt forth doleful lamentations!
—My

...My note is tuned to livelier strains! The intermediate space between this and eight o'clock,—have been the only hours of my life worth recording;—nay, I never lived before!——My Louisa, with what extasy do I tell you, that I am at liberty to listen to the impassioned sounds of my Henry's love!—No one has so good a right to his heart, as your transported Julia!—Take the matter briefly, as related by him to Lady Mortimer and her excellent Lord *en confidence*; but first I must repeat my sister's prelude to her information.

“I cannot but condemn Mortimer, for making me *rather* over-step the limits prescribed us by the Marquis, in revealing, without his knowledge, the following little piece of private history:—but, as my Lord has said so much to you prefatory to the discovery of a secret;—as he has promised to inform you what an exclamation of his alluded to;—and as he has insisted on my keeping you no longer ignorant of the subject of some conversations Lord Osmond has held with us both; I certainly cannot avoid making you acquainted with it.—And it will be as well, after all;—for I suppose, if I do not tell you, Lord Mortimer will.—But I have given a proof that a woman can keep a secret;—else you would not at this moment require the knowledge of what I am about to impart.”—I could have excused her wasting so many words, before she gave me the intelligence my heart panted for. The substance of it ran thus:

The Duke of Westmorland determined from the time that his son was twelve years old to endeavour to effect a match between him and Lady Henrietta, —whose extraordinary large fortune was the chief inducement to his Grace's seeking the connection for the Marquis.—A resolution once taken by him, no earthly motive can compel or persuade him to give up;—more especially when it regards the “*lucre of gain*.” He proposed the affair to Lord Davenport, who readily agreed to give his daughter

ter to one whose veins boasted of some of the most noble blood in the kingdom;—to one, who would in a course of years be an English Duke (a principal charm in the eyes of a late-created Irish Earl);—and one who promised to be so completely perfect in manners and person, as Lord Osmond. Every thing corroborating to the wishes of the avaricious Westmorland, he hastened his son, at the age of eighteen, from Oxford, to send him abroad, that he might the sooner return, and crown his father's hopes, by consummating the desired marriage. In two years after Lord Osmond's departure, his aunt died, and left him two thousand a year, at his own disposal, from the age of one-and-twenty. The Duke, perceiving that the ugliness of Henrietta increased with her years, and that she had not wit or address to compensate for it, began to fear that his son, whom he always called a romantic boy, would not come into his plan so easily as he at first flattered himself with the expectation of.—He thought, should the young Henry know he was independent of his father, it would render the task still more difficult:—he therefore omitted to inform him of Lady Anne Skefley's bequest, and concealed it as much as possible from the world. Moreover, as we are always timid and suspicious, when embarked in a wrong undertaking, the Duke was apprehensive that Osmond might by some means arrive prematurely at the information so studiously kept from his knowledge, if suffered to come over before it was time to celebrate the union his father's heart was set on; wherefore, and lest he should meet with a too *communicative acquaintance* nearer home,—he was ordered to remain entirely, for the four last years of his residence abroad, in Italy.

Lady Anne had, for a great while before her death, resided at Abergavenny, for the benefit of her health.—So far remote from all her connections, she was (as is generally the case) soon forgotten by them.—That it should be the consequence,—was her desire;—

desire;—for, after the death of a tender and amiable husband, and a much-loved sister, she grew disgusted with the world, and kept up no intercourse with any-one. Her liberality to the Marquis was unexpected;—she had quarrelled with his father, and for that reason would not condescend to see his son, though the child of her lamented sister.—In Wales she died;—little or no mention was made of her; so that the Duke had every circumstance in his favour to aid his concealment of her last gift to Osmond.

The Marquis, at the end of two years after this injunction of his father's, tired of the place,—hurt at the constraint imposed on him,—and unwilling to part with his friend Sir Charles Montague, who was going for a few weeks to Paris, resolved to accompany him under a fictitious title. Both the gentlemen were introduced by letters (from an Italian Lady, who was the *confidante* of Osmond's intention) to our amiable Superieure;—they visited her often. And now, Louisa, let me ask, whether you remember, that one day I returned to our apartment quite enchanted with a very handsome young *Cavalier* I had seen in Madame's *salon*?—Caroline recollects it,—and what a fright you and she put me into, by threatening to tell the Nun Sœur Teresa, who had the particular care of us, that I had *fallen in love*;—an expression that shocked me then, as much as it would have done her, had you repeated it to her. 'This circumstance never dwelt further on my mind:—nor should I the next hour have remembered the person who had excited so much admiration in my bosom for a few minutes; much less could I have suspected, when I saw Lord Osmond at the Masquerade, that he was the same beautiful object I had beheld at Paris. Lest the silly adventure should not occur, I will assist your memory by mentioning the consequences of that meeting.

The next day my mother was informed by the Princess, *that a gentleman* (and she mentioned the

borrowed name he went by;—a name Lady Pemberton was a stranger to) *had been urgent with her to discover who I was, and seemed much captivated with me.* God knows for what! On receiving this intelligence, my mother carried Lady Mortimer and me twenty leagues into the country; and we were separated from you for three months. We little suspected the cause;—indeed it was right to keep such an affair from me;—it would have turned a young brain of not quite sixteen.—Yet I doubt whether I should not have hated him for being the means of my absence from my Louisa:—certain it is, I looked on it as the first misfortune that ever happened to me—But my ill stars have pretty well accustomed me to repetitions of the same *malheur*. To return,—this accounts for the words he uttered in the latter part of our conversation at Ranelagh,—words so inexplicable to me at the time; which for ever recur to my imagination. Lord Osmond wearied the Superieure with his enquiries,—and was at last intreated by her to drop his visits:—with difficulty he prevailed on himself to go back to Italy.—He could bear no longer to remain abroad, after Sir Charles Montague's departure,—and writ to beg his father's permission to come to England; which, through the interposition of his friend, was obtained.—Some time after his arrival here, the Duke made known to him his purpose of connecting him to Lady Henrietta. The Marquis positively refused to think of her as a wife.—His father was violently enraged with him, and my Lord was at last obliged to quit his house,—with an intention of seeing him no more,—and, as he was ignorant of the fortune in his own power at the time, determined to set out with a friend of his the next morning, and embark as a volunteer for America. The night after this *fracas* happened, was the one I gave you the particulars of, at the Festino, where I told you he seemed much indisposed, and, as I thought, behaved strangely when leading me to my chair.

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At Lord Osmond's return home he received a letter from his father, apologizing for his conduct in the morning; and begging to see the *injured Henry* (as he acknowledged him to be) the next day. His summons was readily obeyed;—and the Duke met my Lord with an embrace of cordiality, which immediately dissipated all unkind remembrances, and restored each to their pristine serenity.

Westmorland engaged his son to dinner, and to visit with him in the evening;—that *very evening* he had promised the night before, *if it was in his power*, to attend my mother's party to Ranelagh—He came to make her his excuses, as soon as he parted from his father,—You know, my Louisa, what followed;—that I received him with resentment. —Oh! had I been informed of what I now am! —how different a reception! —But no matter—to proceed.

The place the Duke wished Lord Osmond to accompany him to, was Mrs. Aubrey's. After reiterated requests of the Duke, all made with gentleness,—he consented,—first premising that the visit should be looked on by all parties as a mere common one of ceremony; it was the only *one* he determined ever to make the Ladies. This point being settled, they repaired to Burlington-street. The aunt and father sought opportunities to leave the Marquis and Henrietta to entertain each other;—my Lord addressed her with as much distance as it was in the power of a man to do, who could not be absolutely unpolite to any of the sex. Mrs. Aubrey called the Duke to the lower end of the apartment, to view a beautiful commode that had been presented that morning by Lord Davenport to his daughter:—whilst they were thus engaged, and the embarrassed Henry, for politeness sake, was still sitting by Lady Henrietta, the Duke of Northington and Sophia entered the room. Their presence was doubly welcome to Osmond;—he flew to a chair near Lady

Pemberton;—his thoughts, ever wandering after the Portman-Square family, prompted his question to her;—nor did he feel disconcerted at her sight, from the conscious integrity of his intentions, till she rallied him in the suspicious appearance his *PARTIE QUARRE* made:—even then—he foresaw not the unfortunate consequences that might accrue from it;—which, when they did really happen, almost distracted him:—they were the inferences drawn by Sophia from this visit, which she imparted in his presence to me (as I related to you); and it was no longer to be wondered at, that he should discover so much confusion at finding appearances,—looks,—and words, so totally changed from their true colours to those of the most fallacious hue;—yet he could not condemn Sophia for uttering what she thought facts:—if he presumed to contradict her, and vindicate himself, would she or I believe him?—No certainly; we should naturally suppose the same artful deceiver, who prevailed on us to be deaf to the report of his addressing Lady Henrietta, was again speciously employing his dissembling talents, to gloss over so glaring a proof of his intended connection with the Lady.

Thus did he argue, and nearly spoke in those words to my sister.

When we left him at liberty that evening, he unbosomed his soul to Caroline, but desired her, in the most fervent manner, not to divulge what he had deposited in her breast, without his coincidence with it;—lest I should shun (as a just punishment) the presence of one, whose presumption and temerity must appear great, in daring to look up to me without a fortune adequate to what I was entitled to. He intreated her pardon for detaining her attention so long:—it was a relief to him, to make her acquainted with his situation; to receive her consolation,—and behold her sympathy.—Further he must yet lean on her indulgence, he added, and beg that she would endeavour to remove the prejudices I could not but have imbibed against him, from what I had heard Lady Sophia repeat a few hours before with so much plausibility;—
that

that she would assure me (if she thought it right) he was entirely free from any engagement ;—and he was satisfied that what Caroline AVERRED, I must BELIEVE. He doubted whether there was not a degree of madness in the request :—inconsistency and absurdity there certainly were ;—for, as he could entertain so little prospect of my hand, what purpose would it answer to set me right in my surmises ?—Yet, it was worse than the most malignant tortures, to be for a single instant lowered in the opinion of a beloved object.

Lady Mortimer encouraged him to expect much from his merit and my sensibility ; and told him, she was convinced, that, with a man I loved, I should think myself happier in partaking of a very small fortune, than in possessing millions with the poignant reflection that they were the gift of a person indifferent or hateful to me. He kissed her hand with transport.—I well remember that circumstance ;—it surprized, as much as it perplexed me to ascribe the cause ;—but I believe I never told you, nor can I now, how great was my amazement at observing the Marquis's more than usual cheerfulness at supper ;—the summons to which put an end to their tête-à-tête.

“ I should,” cried Lady Mortimer, “ have exculpated Lord Osmond, according to his desire, from the censure Lady Pemberton threw on his sincerity by the description she gave of their interview at Mrs. Aubrey's, had you given me an opening for it ;—but you were reserved, Julia,—and I had no mind to be asked, what it was to you how he behaved ?”

Some weeks after this conversation with my sister, the Marquis spoke to Lord Mortimer in the same strain, with this difference, that I treated him so cruelly, he was in despair ;—things could not be more desperate,—and it would free him from all obtruding doubts, to receive his condemnation from my lips : he therefore resolved (and besought Lord Mortimer to furnish him with a few moments for the occasion) to

declare his sentiments to me, and know the worst at once.

Thus, my Louisa, have I accounted for many circumstances, that, had I known before, would have spared me many miserable hours.

My dear brother!—my admirable Lord Mortimer!—what effusions of gratitude overwhelm my heart, for this proof of friendship! How have you relieved the distressed soul of your Julia!—My Caroline too!—my acknowledgments to both are not to be told.—Oh, Louisa! can it be possible?—Dare I credit, my senses?—Is it reality that I am the beloved,--the only entitled female to the affections of Osmond?—the most amiable---the love-liest of men!---It is!--it is! and I am the happiest of women.

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I saw Lord Mortimer but during breakfast;---immediately after he rode out with Lord Percival and my brother, and I was obliged to attend Lady Percival, my mother, and Miss Edgcumb, in an airing, from which as soon as I returned, I sat down to make you a partaker of my joy. I will now go and try to express my thanks to my Lord for the favour he has bestowed on me;---and at the same time beg him to dispatch this packet with his letters to the post-office at Windsor, after addressing it to my Louisa, and embellishing it with his title. A strange medley, it is certain, you will receive:—I have rung the changes of grief and felicity in truth.—No matter; that the latter has entire dominion over the breast of your Julia, will amply repay you, I am sure, for the ‘tears you have been beguiled of,’ by the distress and anxiety which you have known to disturb hitherto the repose of,

Your ever faithful,

JULIA HERBERT.
P. S.

P. S. Lord Budenall, Mr. Montague, Sir James Westbrook, and Sir John Benyon, are expected down this evening.

To Lady JULIA HERBERT.

Sommerville-House.

YES, my much-loved Julia!—you have indeed “oft beguiled me of my tears.” How have I commiserated your sad-fated attachment!—What nights have I passed in grief surpassing yours if possible!—Oh, how have I wearied heaven with my prayers to extricate you from what I deemed the most ill-placed passion that ever invaded a human breast!—nay,—I have been impious enough to arraign its decrees, in afflicting so greatly its best work; and have been shocked to think what little encouragement human nature had to be good and virtuous, when the model of perfection,—the most amiable of mortals, was given up a prey to anguish and misery. I own myself reprehensible beyond the power of expression, ever to have admitted such unchristian-like reflections to intrude on my imagination;—but spare your chidings,—and be satisfied in knowing that I have been sufficiently punished in my own reproaches. —At the time I suffered so much on your account, I received your last letter:—the beginning of it added to my uneasiness;—the more I read my distress encreased, until I came to the part dated “Monday Noon.”—Judge of my transports at what followed!—judge of them by your own feelings; for my pen is not equal to a description.—I congratulate you, my charming Julia, on your felicity.—Well does Lord Mortimer think, that “*there never was a couple created so formed for each other, as my sweet friend and her incomparable Osmond.*” How clearly

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now do I understand the meaning of Sir Charles's questions and ambiguous manner, whenever you were the subject of our discourse!—Artful creature!—Had he been more candid,—perhaps his Henry at this moment would be much happier than in all probability he is.—What would I not give to know whether Lord Osmond is to be one of your guests!—I cannot doubt it—Hasten to me every information:—your situation becomes critical,—and it will be impossible to be too minute in your accounts.—Yet, so engaged as you are by this time, is it not unreasonable to desire it?—Ah, no!—my Julia is sensible how interested I am in what concerns her, and will not repine at affording me one half-hour in each day.

Sir Charles Montague is at my Lord Beaumont's, who is dangerously ill: he left him for one day to see me. He told me that you are handsomer than ever, but not so chearful as you used to be, he thinks.—Was he to behold you *now*, he would soon revoke his opinion, I hope. I hear from him every day which is the only means he can find to make his absence supportable. I bear it so ill, that I consented to his and my uncle's importunity of fixing a day for our union. Last Tuesday month will be the important one. You will tell me I adopt the style of romance, if I say my heart forebodes some disaster,—some unforeseen calamity.—But away, all painful ideas!—my Julia is happy, and I will not suffer your intrusions at present.

I cannot dear girl write more; Lady Sommerville torments me with her continual presence.—She is grown astonishingly fond of me within these few months; nay, most unnaturally so.—What can it portend?—Nothing favourable, I fear.—This *strange tenderness* gives her sufficient reason, she supposes, to invade my retirement;—for without the slightest notice she is in my dressing-room, and hurries me to accompany her to Mrs. Waulmsley's—Ridiculous, I think.

lous, vain woman! — I have no patience —
Adieu, my best Julia.

LOUISA SYDNEY.

P. S. I admire Miss Edgcumb's character more than ever.—I am sure I should not have had firmness enough to have acted as sensibly as she has done; —but the more I consider my own weakness and folly, the less right I have to name myself in the same sentence with so exalted a girl.

To Lady LOUISA SYDNEY.

Windsor, Wednesday Evening.

SINCE my dearest Louisa so justly condemns the very great fault her extreme partiality led her to commit;—a partiality that causes you to regard my imperfections in a false light;—I will, as you desire, “spare my chidings,” and only entreat my amiable friend never to fall again into a like error. I deserve more——much more, than those slight sufferings, which my weakness magnified to such a height as to appear insupportable;—even for the impatience I shewed under so short a probation. But remember in future, my much-loved Louisa, that, when you see a worthy object labouring with affliction, (I am entirely out of the question,) Providence is not to be censured by short-sighted mortals for its dispensations; and the hand which “chastiseth those it most loveth here,” will amply recompense them with exquisite and lasting happiness for what is scarcely regarded as uneasiness by a better world.—I anticipate your exclamation. “What excellent lectures a mind at ease can deliver!—Were you so moral, Julia, when your heart wrung at distress?—Or have you been contemplating some of Seneca's

Seneca's leaves, to enable you to bear your turn of good fortune with philosophy and moderation?"

God knows what "*turn my fortune*" is yet to take.—At present its prospect is not so very *bril- liant* as when I wrote last;—but I do not complain, —all is tolerably well.

I am sincerely glad that you have at last fixed Sir Charles's day; I wish to God you had done it many weeks—aye months ago.—You would now be of the Windfor party, which is really a numerous one. —You must indeed give me leave to laugh at your *foreboded misfortunes*.—Why, in the name of wonder, my Louisa, will you seek for wretchedness so unaccountably?—Summon your extraordinary good sense from the *nap* you have permitted it to take;—enjoy your happiness, and, not only "*for the present*," but for ever, banish all obtruding, anxious, and unnecessary fears. It would indeed be strange, were I to think any request of yours unreasonable; much less one that will give such infinite pleasure as complying with your last must do.—I will appropriate, not half an hour,—but many half-hours at different times in each day to my pen,—and be as minute as you can wish me. A sort of bashful timidity hindered me from asking Lady Mortimer whether Lord Osmond was expected at Windfor?—Your curiosity on this head was very inferior to mine; still I could not conquer the punctilio that kept me silent, and I underwent the most disagreeable of situations,—that of suspense.

I think I told you that Sir John Benyon, Lord Budenall, Sir James Westbrook, and Mr. Montague, were expected last Monday evening. Between eight and nine o'clock, as we were all seated in the saloon, a rattling of carriages and galloping of horses were heard. "They are come!" exclaimed Mortimer, and ran out to meet his friends, for whose arrival he had seemed impatient some hours. After several minutes had elapsed, he returned following six gentlemen. The first that appeared was a tall elegant figure, whose height and air resembled the

the Duke of Suffolk's. I was convinced it must be he, and my spirits sunk,—but were quickly revived by hearing my mother cry, “My Lord, I am rejoiced to see you!—How does your Lordship?” As it was dusk, and I placed at a great distance from the door at which they entered, I could not distinguish plainly the objects:—but when I observed the inimitable grace with which he addressed my mother, and heard his voice,—my Lord Osmond could no longer be mistaken.—The other gentlemen were the four I mentioned, and Mr. Bishop. As the Marquis approached the place where I sat, which he did as he made his bow to the ladies in turn, I thought I should have fainted—My heart throbbed,—my knees trembled,—and I could hardly stand while our visitors paid us their compliments. I was glad the lights did not appear directly,—else my confusion must have been but too perceptible. My Lord took no particular notice of me; he was all vivacity. I overheard him tell Lady Mortimer, *that she had much to answer for*. She asked *what he meant?* “In distressing many hearts by your own and sister's absence so suddenly from London,” he replied. “*Suddenly!* why I am sure you knew of our intention.” “True,—but poor Fermor, Bel-fielde, and Conway, were quite ignorant of it, and most probably have hanged themselves by this time.” At supper, my Lord Osmond sat opposite to me. My brother asked him for Lady Henrietta. “She is well,—I saw her last Friday at Ranelagh,” was his answer.—His eyes were fixed on me, as he spoke. I blushed,—and he threw them down. Lord Mortimer mentioned his theatre, and intention of becoming *manager* of a play-house.—They all approved the scheme; and Osmond told him, he desired he would make what use he pleased of *him* in assisting any of the performances:—the rest followed his example, which gratifies my good brother not a little. The next day, the gentlemen dined with

with Mr. Freeman, a neighbour of ours; and the Ladies were taken up in getting their parts: Almeria and Sophia were particularly engaged in that province, as their play (the Earl of Warwick) will be performed to-morrow night. A Miss Johnson does Clifford;—Sir James Weltbrook, Edward:—the other characters will be supported by Mr. Montague, Lord Budenall, and Sir John Benyon.

At night when the gentlemen returned, they were in high good humour, and endeavoured to render themselves perfectly agreeable. They were soon followed by the Duke of Suffolk, and Mr. Ainsley, who arrived from London: and to dinner this day, came, from the same place, Mrs. and the two Miss Pelham's;—the former is an absolute *fine* Lady,—her daughters two pleasing young women.—Hark!—Sophia calls,—I must go to her,

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Never was man so changed in his carriage as Lord Osmond is to me!—no longer assiduous to engage my conversation;—no apprehensions *now* of my bestowing that heart on another he once so earnestly solicited.—He convinces me, that he *can* be happy, though I refused him.—Where are all his vows,—his ardent assurances of not surviving my indifference, so frequently repeated to Lady Mortimer? Forgotten!—and I have the misfortune of experiencing, that the woman who depends on the constancy of a man, leans on a broken reed.—I said in the beginning of my letter, *all was tolerably well*: I observed Lord Osmond's *nonchalance*,—but flattered myself he affected it, to convince me he was piqued at my behaviour;—that he would soon drop it,—and, in spite of my prohibition, seek an opportunity to address me once more on a subject I had reason to believe very near his heart.—I must confess,

fess, at the moment I formed *such* a hope,—I trembled at the idea of *such* a conversation, and rather avoided an occasion for it;—but was he the same tender Osmond I left in town, he would, notwithstanding my reserve, have found a time to renew the topic. Surely, Louisa, there is no deviation from delicacy in what I write!—I was prevailing on myself to be satisfied with his behaviour, and wait patiently the *dénouement* of it all day;—and should be in the same disposition now,—but for what I am going to mention, which has convinced me my Lord has conquered his passion as suddenly as he formed it.

Sophia called to me, to desire I would accompany Lady Percival, Miss Edgcumb, Miss Pelham's, Almeria, and herself, to see a grotto in the hermitage. For a great while the ladies were averse to any beaux attending them;—however, five of them declared, *they would presume for once to disregard their commands, since they clashed so violently with their happiness*, and, snatching up their hats, went out with us.—The five gentlemen were, the Duke of Suffolk, Lord Mortimer, Lord Osmond, Mr. Bishop, and Mr. Montague. As we quitted the hall, Lord Osmond presented one arm to Lady Pemberton, the other to Almeria:—the Duke of Suffolk walked at my side;—but my hands were too well employed in carrying Bijou, and holding my hat, to follow the example of the other Ladies in leaning on their *escorts*. His Grace intreated me to let him take the dog;—but you may suppose I did not consent for many reasons. As Lord Osmond followed close with my two sisters, I overheard him say to one, “Hift!—you go too fast!—I believe we must keep a greater distance, or we may interrupt the *tête-à-tête*;—and that would be very cruel, you know, to both parties,—more especially to Suffolk.” I hastily turned, and beckoned to Miss Edgcumb, who came to me directly.—After putting her hand through my arm, I looked at my sisters and their companion, and with a smile *thanked them aloud for their consideration*.

tion. "I should have blessed you for it, Osmond," cried the Duke, "had you expressed it lower." I thought the Marquis seemed angry,---he reddened,---his eyes sparkled,—and he bit his lips. Suffolk's countenance reproached me also; but that I little regarded.—Lord Osmond and I took no further notice of each other during our walk;—and I gave his Grace not a minute of my conversation unattended by a third person.—Is it not strange that Osmond should be so zealous to furnish a professed rival with an opportunity of declaring to me the same sentiments I so lately heard from his own lips?—The Duke is a man very capable of inspiring the most tender inclinations, and I observe his particular distinction of me often makes *two* of my good friends look grave, which I endeavour to dispel; by convincing them he is not more esteemed than they are. You must know, that I mean Lords Budenall and Seymour:—Belfield cannot be serious;—his love, though teasing to the object, will never, I think, be prejudicial to himself. The gay, laughing Henry appears as much composed as if Suffolk was a disgusting creature, from whom he had nothing to apprehend;—or, rather, as if he took no interest in the disposal of my hand,—which is certainly the case.—I might still hope this mode of conduct is assumed to try me, did he shew a preference to any female in my sight;—but so far from it,—that it is impossible to say which Lady he is most gallant to.

When we returned, and were assembled in the saloon, Lord Osmond stepped to a seat next me. "I must beg your forgiveness, Lady Julia," cried he, "for the unfortunate interruption I was the cause of giving your *serviteur* just now;—I was unlucky---but my meaning good."—"I easily pardon it, my Lord;---our conversation was not so important as to make either"—"Oh!--I do not presume to enquire what it was,—though it may be easily guessed;—no man can speak to you, without mecha-

mechanically making love the subject ;---such exquisite beauty inspires even the lowest of our sex ;---and when the cause is considered, their arrogance should be pitied at the time it is condemned.-----

But I must compensate for the mischief I have done ; Suffolk comes this way ;---he shall have my place. Sure my generosity excites your admiration ! ---What a pleasure do I resign !---Happy Suffolk ! ---Must I go Lady Julia ?" "As your Lordship pleases," replied I, rather haughtily I believe. "I will gratify your Ladyship ;" and away he flew. The Duke did take his place, and with all the ardour imaginable painted his love, and hopes of being one day entitled to call me his. Do you think, my Louisa, I was not distressed ?-----Indeed I was !-----I could scarcely restrain my tears. Ofmond's cruelty in giving me up so palpably shocked me severely :--yet I deserved it.---I had no right to treat him with the little compassion he experienced from me, when his soul spoke to me in the bitterness of anguish.---But, my God ! did I not act from honourable principles ?--Be it as it may, he is amply revenged ! --The only man with whom I could be happy, thinks me capricious,--no longer worthy of his affections,---and has for ever banished me from them :-- he will never---ah, never, my Louisa, touch upon the grateful theme, that could allow me to convince him how erroneously I judged a few weeks ago ;---he abandons me,---and I have very little comfort left !

* * * * *

I soon disengaged myself from the Duke, and went into the music-parlour, with Almeria, Lady Percival, and two or three gentlemen. Most of the company surrounded the card-tables, some playing, others looking on.

"Come,

"Come, dear Julia," cried Lady Percival, after my sister had obliged Lord Budenall with her finger and voice; "give me, sweet girl, my favourite song out of *Il Bacio*."---"I will play for you, my Lady, but I forget how to sing." "I cannot excuse you,---be as good as you used to be. Lord Seymour---and here is Lord Mortimer too"---he just then entered---"shall accompany you on the flute, and Mr. Montague on the violin."---They took up the instruments, and I sat down to the Piano Forté. From the time my sister began to play, the room filled;---as soon as I finished, I heard these words from a mouth close to my ear, "Oh, thou inimitable, lovely creature! with what rapture do I gaze on you,---with what extasy hear you!---Why do you seek to destroy the peace of so many?" On turning my head suddenly to see who spoke, my lips touched Lord Osmond's;---I blushed. "Blessed accident!---what a reward!---Oh, my Julia, were you less cruel"---"I beg my Lord, you"---"Say no more,---I will not offend;---but you know not the heart you despise,---you have so contemptuously rejected." He retired from my chair, and to avoid being particular I was obliged to continue playing and singing for some time longer.

At supper,---I saw not the Marquis till then,---he again was distant to me, and chearful with every one else.

This evening Lady Caroline Denley, Mrs. Ashley, and a profusion of beaux, arrived here.---To enumerate their names would take up too much of my time and paper.

* * * * *

Thursday Afternoon.

I have been just down to welcome the Duke of Northington, Sir Thomas and Lady Walpole, Captain and Miss Walpole, to Windsor.---You know them

them all, my Louisa, and what an acquisition they are to our agreeable society. I have been busy most part of the day in assisting Sophia and Almeria in preparations for their appearance presently: their timidity encreases as the time draws near;---I have strove to dissipate it, for there is no doubt but that they will acquit themselves well.

The audience each night will be a small one;---on that condition only, the Ladies consented to play: and though my Lord Mortimer has been sadly teased for tickets,---he has had the address to refuse all above his fixed number without affronting one creature. He will not inform us how many are to be admitted. Every inhabitant of the house is regarded as a privileged person to be a spectator, but not entitled to introduce a soul into the theatre;---I include domestics, as well as their superiors. All my Lord's trades-people about this seat, his tenants, their wives, grown-up sons and daughter's have leave to fill the pit and gallery, and are presented with tickets for every night that *the company performs*. Such as gain admittance to the boxes, are blue,---to the other parts of the house, yellow; both sorts are sealed with Mortimer's arms, and marked with his own signature. I am told several persons have travelled some miles, in expectation of seeing so *ridiculous an amusement*; and hoped their trouble would have been repaid, by finding *food for laughter*:---in that they would be disappointed; for our *tragedians* are very *decent* performers, to speak in the style of the Morning-Post. If their curiosity does not *really* take its rise from so illiberal a motive, I am sorry it cannot be gratified: though I think my brother very right in suffering no innovation on the *settled plan*; that once to happen, adieu to all decorum, and regularity in conducting the affair:---besides, it would indeed be acting for the public.

After the play, we are to have the Rival Candidates: Almeria and Lady Percival support the women's characters; the men's as follow:

Byron

Byron by my brother;—General Worry, Mr. Dacre;—Sir Harry Muff, Sir James Westbrook; and Spy, by Mr. Bishop. There is a delightful band for the orchestra from London; and you cannot imagine any thing so pretty as the scenery, or more superb and elegant than the dresses are.

My sisters wait for Miss Johnson, to repair with them to the theatre, and there robe themselves in all their pageant attire. "*Our Clifford of to-night*" is the daughter of a very worthy clergyman, who lives two miles from hence. My mother accompanies the Ladies to their dressing-rooms, to direct them in placing their ornaments:—you know what an excellent judge of dress she is. She will meet us in the box (which holds twelve people) before the play begins: Lady Mortimer's accommodates the rest of our party, that are no performers.—I am summoned to coffee;—in an hour the carriages will set off.—Miss Johnson is come,—and I see the coach driving up to the door that is to convey them to the theatre.—Ah, poor souls!—how I pity ye!

* * * * *

Thursday Night, half past Eleven o'Clock.

We are this moment returned.—No, it is impossible,—I cannot attempt describing Lord Mortimer's happiness at the extraordinary success of his favourite project;—to see every-thing managed with such propriety,—to observe delight and admiration painted on every countenance,—to listen to the plaudits bestowed on the justly-deserving actors and actresses:—he is in raptures,—and it will require some days to inure him to his present felicity, ere we can hope to find him a little composed.—To say the truth, he has reason to plume himself on his cleverness and taste;—no performance could go off better.

My mother's coach carried Lady Percival, Lord Osmond, Captain Walpole, and myself, to the theatre

thatre (I am ignorant how the rest were marshalled). On alighting, we delivered our tickets to two stewards, who were appointed to receive at the front door those for the boxes. We then proceeded through a long lobby to a side-box, which was called for in Lady Pemberton's name, a box-keeper conducting us to it:—I really thought myself at Drury-lane. On entering we found Miss Edgcumb, Mrs. and Miss Pelham, Lady Pemberton, the Duke of Suffolk, and Mr. Temple, already seated. We were struck with the profusion and disposition of the lights, which formed a fine *coup d'œil*;—but there were twice the number of people I imagined we should meet, which accounts for Lord Mortimer's not telling us how many tickets he had given out. The Marquis, with great adroitness, placed himself directly behind me, and bore much resemblance in his behaviour to what Lord Osmond was in London, when we have been engaged on similar parties.

After we had been seated ten minutes, the curtain drew up. Almeria and Miss Johnson appeared exceedingly confused: the latter repeated the first speech so low, that we could hardly catch a word;—but, by the time she had finished it,—my sister recovered herself sufficiently to go through hers with spirit,—and was astonishingly great in the character;—her pronunciation very clear,—her action just, and graceful to perfection: she worked up the passions the author meant to excite very admirably. Miss Johnson discarded her fright, and acquitted herself to satisfaction. Sophia discovered no apprehension, and excelled in her line. Lady Pemberton and Almeria, looked like angels, and abundant *bo-mage* paid them. Miss Johnson is genteel, but not handsome. The gentlemen performed delightfully;—a prettier Edward, or handsomer Warwick, I do not believe was ever seen.—I question whether the real Monarch (who you know was remarkable for his charms) was so lovely as our fictitious King. Sir John Benyon, Lord Budenall, &c. &c. had but little

little opportunity of displaying their talents, as their characters were rather trifling;—however, they made the most of them,—and were graceful and easy. When Mr. Montague gave out the Provoked Husband for next Monday, I imagined the house would have fallen, it shook so violently with acclamations. But how shall I express to you the excellent performance of the farce!—or convey to you an idea of the humour with which each person entered into their part!—Clever as they all were, Mr. Bishop, in Spy, surpassed them;—we thought the spirit of poor Weston was suffered to tread the stage, with all its human drollery, to assist Lord Mortimer's wishes. Every creature bore the marks of pleasure on their countenance during the whole representation.—On Saturday next we are to have a ball.

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Friday Morning, Two o'Clock.

When we were all assembled at supper (for the Ladies were not *fine* enough to plead fatigue, after the exertion they had undergone, as an excuse for their not appearing at table), Lord Mortimer mentioned that Tancred and Sigismunda was to be the third play; and, addressing himself to the Marquis,

“You know, Osmond, I told you two days ago, that you are to personate the young Sicilian hero.” He gracefully bowed, “You did, my Lord; and I have made some proficiency in *my lesson*.”

He turned to my sister, “Is Lady Almeria preparing her part, to be my Sigismunda?” “Oh! no, my Lord;—I have *done my part*.” “Not entirely I hope—Then, Mortimer, who will *play* the *heroine*?—which of these Ladies.” Lord Mortimer directed his eyes to me: “Our Julia must undertake it.” “Certainly!” cried the Duke of Suffolk. “Certainly!” echoed every voice, but my good Caroline's and Osmond's.—I would not hear the proposal. “Nay,” said Sophia, “if my sister will not oblige us,

us, she tacitly condemns us all who have performed.”
 “By no means,” answered I: “if I owned talents for the purpose,—I should not hesitate to comply with the request;—but, destitute as I am of them, surely my friends will not wish me to expose myself!” They paid me the compliment they could not without being impolite refuse to a person who expressed any diffidence of their powers. Lord Pemberton declared, *it would be cruel to refuse them.* The Marquis interrupted something he was going to add, by the following enquiry: “Is your sister’s disposition a *cruel* one, Pemberton?—I am inclined to believe you mistaken, if you imagine so.” “I never *thought so till now,*” replied my brother. “But I see plainly that it is,—else she would not deny us a favour our hearts are set on.”

“*My Lords and Gentlemen,*” cried Osmond, in a ludicrous tone, and acting as he spoke, “hence let me warn you never to trust to appearances.—Behold this example---who would imagine *cruelty* could be concealed under so fair a mask?—Yet you hear her brother has confessed it,—and I hold his veracity too highly to entertain a doubt of it.”—“Though you bestow your ridicule on me,” said I to Lord Osmond in a low voice, “I will readily forgive, ay thank you for it, since it changes a subject that pains me exceedingly.” “Not so, my Lady;—it was far from my intention—Think you *I* am not the most anxious of any for your performing?—Certainly I am!—I may *then*, under the semblance of fiction, be permitted to utter the real sentiments I feel, which I am so positively forbidden to breathe in earnest:—nay, under the same disguise, I shall have a return of passion expressed—How delicious will the sound be!—Would to heaven the illusion could last for ever!”

“We will say no more of the play, my Lord;—and then”——“What then?” demanded he eagerly. Louisa, my delicacy was alarmed—I could not for my life have completed the sentence my heart first dictated, and which an unlucky—I must

call it unlucky pause, prevented me from speaking. I wished to have said, "*And then you shall not find me so tyrannical as you think me.*" But to utter it, was impossible.—"What then?" repeated he still more impatiently, with the most imploring eyes I ever beheld, yet illumined with joy, fixed on my face.

"I shall think myself much obliged to you."—Oh Louisa!—what a reproachful look he gave me!—He raised his voice, and, turning from me, exclaimed,

"Oh, your Ladyship must pardon me, for disobeying you.—Lord Mortimer—Lord Pemberton—do you let this matter rest?—Must not Lady Julia perform Sigismunda? I was again overwhelmed with entreaties:—at last, Lord Budenall declared, *he looked upon my consenting as a thing of course; and proposed that it should be the fourth play, instead of the third, as I might not be prepared so soon.* This was readily agreed to, and the subject concluded by Lady Caroline Denley's and my uncle's telling me *they were determined I should comply, and there was no more to be said.*

I make myself easy about the matter, because I know Lady Mortimer will be so indulgent as to undertake the part for me. Sleep weighs down my eye-lids,—I must drop my pen.

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As soon as I was drest this morning, I went into my mother's apartment to make my enquiries after her health: she snatched the opportunity of speaking warmly in the Duke of Suffolk's favour.—I started at the ungrateful theme, and begged her to expatiate no further on it.—Ah! with what a stern look did she regard your poor Julia!—I did not think Lady Pemberton could look so sternly.

"Romantic,—nonsensical girl!" "Forgive me, Madam;—how have I offended?—Have you not taught

taught me to be ingenuous?—I dislike the Duke—I cannot conceal it.” “*Ingenuous!*” repeated my mother with a milder aspect; “you will prove *that* when you declare the obstacles that prevent Suffolk’s succeeding.” “Let me beseech you, my Lady, to grant me a few weeks respite from encouraging the Duke’s solicitations;—but a few weeks: and then, if I do not urge reasons that must satisfy you I *ought* not to give him my hand;—if, after hearing them, you continue to persuade me thus cruelly,—a method far surer of gaining a point than harshly commanding;—I will, as I have done all my life, yield obedience to your wishes,—and become the most unhappy of beings to gratify you, since my mother can have pleasure in my misery.” Could I have spoken more to the heart, my Louisa?—Lady Pemberton paused;—I threw myself on my knees and embraced her. “Only a few weeks, my mother!”—She caught me in her arms, and kissed my forehead.

“Be it so, thou dear, irresistible girl!—I am contented, and will wait your leisure to hear the motives that at present actuate your obstinacy respecting Suffolk.—I will not till then interfere;—nor do I desire to lay any constraint on you during this short space that is devoted to joy and happiness—your portion of both shall not be interrupted:—but remember, at our departure from hence, I expect to find my daughter as reasonable, and as considerate of her mother’s felicity as she has ever been. We will call another subject. Why, Julia, do you refuse to play Sigismunda?—Is not our excellent Mortimer entitled to every gratification you or any of the family can afford him?—Do not the entreaties you received from *all* last night, deserve a concession?—What motive can you have, more than your sister, or the other Ladies, for denying to perform?” I pleaded the old excuse, incapacity and timidity. My mother said *the excuse was ridiculous, and must make me appear very conceited.* I defended myself a few minutes to no purpose;—she silenced

my objections, and bid me remark the delicacy of Lord Mortimer, in chusing for Tancred no lover of mine, but one who was known to be engaged a very different way.—How my heart reproached me!—I grew cold,—I could not answer. “Well, my dear girl! you are not resolved to put a negative on every solicitation I make, it is to be hoped!—Grant *me* the favour of undertaking the part.” “You are the only person, Madam, for whom I would undertake it.—Hard as the task is, I readily consent to your desire.” She was well pleased; and after embracing me, I left her, to go in pursuit of Lady Mortimer.

I complained to her, in the bitterness of my heart, of Lord Osmond’s behaviour:—my sister owned herself offended and astonished at it.—She was extremely hurt at my mother’s perseverance in the Duke’s favour; and suffered the tear of sympathy to adorn her cheek, as I related Lady Pemberton’s and my conversation. We then recurred again to the former topic, Lord Osmond’s strange carriage towards me.

“We must be patient, my Julia,” cried she. “Not doubting but that you retain the same prejudices against him,—he assumes this indifference before you with a hope of piqueing your pride, which once humbled, he flatters himself, will render the fortress of your heart less impregnable;—and it must be confessed, that you treated him barbarously in London—fatal error!”

“*Fatal indeed*, my sister!—Was my Lord to reveal to me what he has done to you and my brother, I would not fail to inform Lady Pemberton of it, and of my unchangeable partiality;—then would she, I am sure, desist from persecuting me about Suffolk, and at once consent to the Marquis’s addresses. To tell her *now* how I am situated, would draw her aversion, perhaps, on Osmond, and censure on me for entertaining what she would indubitably call a *romantic* passion, since, to appearance, the Marquis is *endeavouring* to conquer his.—She has already

ready called me a *romantic girl*;—I hope I do not deserve the appellation.—If my Lord again avows his love to me shortly,—I have nothing to fear; it would be injuring my mother's tenderness to doubt of her concurrence with our wishes:—but, should he persist in this perplexing conduct,—I foresee the most horrible misfortunes from it.—What is to be done? Though Lady Pemberton may be silent,—the Duke will not—and if I absolutely reject him (the thing I most ardently wish to do), shall I not be disobedient to my mother?—And to evade a positive refusal, is to encourage him.—My God, instruct me how to act! I would rather die than marry Suffolk; and I would prefer even marrying him to disobliging my mother. But I once thought, Caroline, she would never be so urgent with a child of hers to marry any object they had the shadow of a dislike to." Lady Mortimer bid me not be uneasy: she was sure, she said, every thing would turn out well. God grant it!—But I have much to apprehend.

"Tell me, my sister," said I, "before you leave me, is there any one of the ladies now in the house, that you think seems attached to Lord Osmond?"

"Certainly!" replied she; "I *think*—you are, Julia.—Am I wrong?"

"Well, do not laugh, but answer me;—I am out of the case."

"Indeed, then, my dear, I do;—I never saw any woman more captivated in my life than the youngest Miss Pelham is. You must perceive it, by asking the question. I am actually ashamed for her, when she stares at Osmond for a length of time, and then draws such deep sighs as cannot escape him.—I wonder her sister does not speak to her of it! She is a sensible girl, and more likely to observe the impropriety of it than the mother, who is really silly enough."—What think you, Louisa, of this circumstance? Charlotte Pelham is pretty, and I imagine I do not injure her in saying she is artful. The latter, you must know, is dangerous to the unsuspecting:—yet I cannot believe the Marquis will

be caught by her allurements; he seems indifferent to her.—She is not, I fancy, the sort of woman he likes;—but it is difficult to pronounce what time and gratitude may effect.---However, I am not uneasy about her, I assure you.

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Friday Night, Eleven.

Ah, this cruel, artful, insinuating Osmond!--Why, my Louisa, cannot he set my mind in some degree at peace, by ceasing to disturb me with his inconsistencies?---If indeed he gives me up entirely—why not let me imagine so, by being uniformly indifferent on every occasion?—Distressing as such a certainty must be, how preferable to this suspense!—But, if I am still dear to him,—as I have reason sometimes to think—oh!—why not afford himself one trial more?

After dinner this day, before the Ladies retired, as I was engaged attentively in discourse with Mr. Dacre, I did not observe a wasp that fixed upon my neck, till alarmed by hearing my mother scream, who sat opposite to me. Every one was in motion, —and called to me not to stir: terrified as I was, I had presence of mind enough to obey them. Lord Osmond, quick as lightning, anticipated the rest. By some means which I cannot divine, he got the wasp into his hand, and saved me from its venom by receiving the sting himself. I was sorry to be freed from it at such an expense;—his fore-finger, that sustained the injury, became violently swelled, —and shortly after his whole hand:—he made light of it, and when pressed to apply some specific to the affected part, turned it off in a jest, by saying, *he could not blame the insect for revenging the mischief he had done it in depriving it of so charming an abode as the one it had chosen, and therefore patiently bore so trifling an inconvenience as a just punishment from a wasp of such exquisite taste.* “The least you can do, Julia,” cried my brother, “is to insist on administering

tering a cure for the wound you have occasioned.—Osmond will not deny permitting a Lady to become his physician.” He put a proper remedy into my hand, and desired me to apply it to the Marquis’s.—Osmond led me a little apart from the company.

“ You hear, Madam,—you are desired by your brother to apply a cure to the wound you have occasioned :—will you not obey him ?”

“ With the greatest pleasure, my Lord.—I am very unfortunate to have been the cause ;—better I had suffered myself !——Give me leave to look at your hand.” He presented it,——and, whilst I bound the ribband (which he sought fifty excuses to place—and replace, that he might detain me the longer), he continued speaking low to me.

“ Every suffering that I could screen you from, by enduring myself, would be considered by me as so many blessings :—yet I make an exception ;—there is one,—and only *one*, which I wish you to sympathize with me in.” “ What, my Lord ?”

“ Is it so difficult to guess, my Lady ?—You have promised to administer relief to the pain you have given :—the anguish lies not in my finger—(stay, Lady Julia,—a pin might supply the place of this knot)—but it could be easily found in my heart.—You are silent ;—will you never compassionate your poor Osmond ?—Well, at least permit me to kiss these lovely hands, for the charitable office they have performed.—I could wish to be stung by twenty wasps every day, if after each dart I was to be thus amply recompensed.”—He sighed, and pressed my hand tenderly as he led me back to the company.

“ You are a happy man, Osmond,” exclaimed the Duke of Suffolk, “ in a double sense ; first to have been able to rescue Lady Julia from the *fell* weapon of her enemy, and next in being rewarded so highly for your service.—Were you not an *engaged man*, I should be devilishly apprehensive ;—but, regarding you in *that* light, I can allow you to have deserved the favours you just now received,

and am far better pleased you are *the man*, than a few I could name, now present." "Perhaps, Suffolk, you mean to question me in what manner my *engagements really stand?*"—"Not I—'tis very well known;—and, as you are a man of nice honour, I can have no suspicions."

Lord Osmond (whose colour heightened at the Duke's first speech) darted at him a look of fiery contempt, and repeated "*No suspicions!*" I caught Lord Mortimer shaking his head at the Marquis, as much as to say, "If you proceed, our plot is disconcerted." I believe Osmond understood him in some such sense.—He immediately recovered himself, and answered, "Your Grace is the *happy man* you just now called me:—my gratification was a temporary one,—yours will be the most lasting felicity,—and, by your manner of speaking,—seems built on a sure foundation." I could plainly discover irony in this reply—but no one else did:—the Duke took it for a compliment, and reared his head up an inch higher than usual. It was against my nature to sit tamely by, and hear the man whom my soul most abhorred, assuming to himself a privilege to which he had no title. As soon as Suffolk's and Osmond's short dialogue ended, I addressed Lord Seymour audibly in the following manner:

"Pray, my Lord, why do not you and Lord Budenall express *your suspicions?* You have just as good a right to do so as the Duke of Suffolk.—I may, without an imputation of vanity, call on you in this manner; for there is no one present who has not heard his Grace, your Lordship, and Lord Budenall, do me the unmerited honour of declaring yourselves my lovers;—and it is proper to mention, after what I have just attended to, that his Grace has received no encouragement which can give him any authority to speak in the assured manner he has done."

The Duke bit his lips, and traversed the room in agitation: Lord Seymour answered diffidently,—but very gallantly: my brother whispered in my ear,

"Perverse—

“Perverse—haughty—impolite girl!—you must make the Duke an apology.” “No indeed,” was my answer.—I feared to look at my mother;—I knew what reproach I should find in her countenance.—I threw my eyes on Caroline and Miss Edgcumb, and saw they were suppressing a laugh. Lord Mortimer’s features demonstrated amazement and joy. Sophia and Almeria borrowed their looks from Lady Pemberton and my brother. I took courage and cast a glance at the Marquis. His eyes were fixed on the floor; one hand (the poor maimed one) in his bosom, the other engaged in playing with his watch-chain. In spite of his effort to conceal what passed in his heart, I plainly saw pleasure illumine his heavenly eyes, when he reared them from the ground—and perceived smiles play about his mouth. “Good heaven, how cruel you are!” cried Osmond: “Poor Suffolk!” Oh, that I may be able to punish you for this! said I to myself. I turned my head away instantly, and observed Sir James Westbrook leaning over my chair. “Ha, ha! you are a girl of spirit faith,” cried he; I did not think it was in you!—Upon my soul, I am in love with you from henceforward:—*now* every one will be at rest;—I mean of your idolators.—You have nothing to do, but tell them *I* intend you for myself; and you must endeavour to bear your felicity with moderate joy—I have a few pangs at the idea of what two Duchesses, six Countesses, and a hundred women of rather inferior distinction, will suffer—Poor little Emily too,—she will break her heart---but no matter;—I am determined to reward *you* for your spirited behaviour just now.” I was vexed at his trifling levity at such a moment, and left him with a peevish air, after complimenting him with “how ridiculous you are, Sir James!”

I sidled towards my mother, and stood behind her. “I am offended with you, Julia,” said she, in a low voice. I declared my concern at it, but vindicated what I had spoken to the Duke.—Lady Pemberton passed it over, and made me no more reproaches.

After tea, as I was sitting between Lord Osmond and Mr. Temple, the Duke of Suffolk, leaning on my brother's shoulder, approached, and stood before me.

"I have brought Pemberton, Lady Julia," cried he, "to be my intercessor—at his request, you will not refuse to pardon the inadvertency of mine (which you construed into arrogance), that has drawn on me your displeasure. As you *publicly* accused me of transgressing,—I *publicly* sue for forgiveness;" and down he dropped on one knee, throwing himself at the same time into a most becoming position. He certainly looked handsome at the moment,—even I could not help thinking so. My brother, in a sarcastic manner, asked *if my heart was adamant?* The humbled Suffolk would not rise, till I *assured him that I was reconciled*;—and, as a proof of it, I offered him my hand, which he kissed with an air of rapture. Lord Osmond started from his seat, and left the room, but soon returned and found the Duke sitting next to me.—I had so much of the woman in me, as to appear more affable with him in the Marquis's presence than usual; and could not avoid feeling some satisfaction at seeing the late *laughing, gay, indifferent* Henry, mortified and disconcerted in his turn. When a man will descend to coquetry, Louisa, (a mean quality I ever despised in one of our sex), I can pardon an object for tormenting him with his own weapons;—therefore my behaviour rests excused to myself.

Just before we retired,—as Miss Edgcumb and I were standing together near a window, Lord Osmond pretended that she had dropped something, and stooped to restore it to her:—she said *he was mistaken*,---it did not belong to her.---He offered it to me:---I examined what he held in his hand as he presented it, without attempting to receive it, and saw it was a sealed paper.---I immediately disclaimed it.-----He persisted that it was my property, and pressed me, in the most fervent terms (which carried a double meaning, and were interpreted by

Miss

Miss Edgcumb and myself very differently I dare believe), *to take what I knew in my soul no one had so good a title to as my Ladyship*. I positively refused the paper. Our altercation drew Sir James Westbrook and Lord Pemberton to the spot. They enquired what occasioned it? "These Ladies," replied the artful Marquis, "have dropped a *billet-doux*;---each of them, fearful of a discovery, by exciting a little curiosity not *quite so convenient* to either of them to answer, refuse to accept of it,---thinking, as the seal is whole, they cannot be accused of *knowing the contents*,---or *guessing at the courageous youth*.---Briefly, my Lord, their timidity conquers their wishes, and leaves me master of the *spoils*." "Give it to me, Osmond!" cried Pemberton. "That I object to," exclaimed Westbrook: you---a Benedic, have no business with such things now. "*Thou, poor wretch! are past 'em*."---But, dear Osmond, I conjure you, by all the hopes you have of succeeding in your favourite wish with your favourite mistress, to commit that said *billet-doux* to my hands!"

"Your conjurement acts on me as a spell," replies the Marquis: "it is powerful, and requires some sort of charm on my side to oppose its influence.---*Then*, as I hope to convince that much-loved haughty *one* you have named, of the sincerity and ardour of my passion;---as I hope to inspire her with a mutual return,---and one day be blessed in her possession;---*I will not*.---I must reap the advantage of these Ladies perversenesses.---If *you* are the author of the writing I now put into my pocket (which there is much reason to suspect, Westbrook, though I am at a loss to determine whether *your cousin* was the object in point, or Miss Edgcumb), you can have no occasion sure to *re-peruse* it!---I will keep your secret, never fear.---I give you credit, however, for playing off very well so artful a piece of dissimulation.---As to you, my Lord---I think it highly improper that *you* should have any thing to say to the paper.---A married man and a *billet-doux* should never
be

be mentioned in the same sentence.—When I enter into the state which you adorn—and, I flatter myself, the time is not very distant—I will not fail to practise what I now advise. The three gentlemen turned off to the lower end of the room laughing ;—and, in a few minutes after, the Ladies repaired to their apartments.—I am strangely puzzled to know what the letter could contain.---I think it was meant for me ;—he made only a slight offer of it to Miss Edgcomb,—and that merely to cover his design. ———It was silly of me not to take it !———Yet I am glad that I did not ;—there was too much the appearance of a clandestine procedure in the manner of giving it.

I have no sleep in my eyes,—and, though it is late, I will write on.

Lord Budenall assured me, *he very plainly sees, from what passes continually, that my friends wish to salute me Duchess of Suffolk* ; “but remember,” added he, with his usual impetuosity, “*that event shall never happen, whilst this hand can draw a trigger, —or this wrist make a lounge. —I will not resign you to any man upon earth—excepting one that I have fixed on in my own mind ;—and he is so worthy of you, that, ardently as I love you, I cannot be unjust enough to prevent a union, which, I actually see, Providence intended from your births. ———Your dislike to the Duke is easily discovered by me ;—therefore, I am passive :—else your mother’s—your brother’s—your sister’s solicitude—I stopped him short, by declaring I would bear no more ;—and reproached him severely for his violence, I asked him, What entitled him to dispute the will of those whom it was my greatest happiness to obey ?—If they were fond of the match, did it not evince their tenderness and love of me, in forbearing to insist on my sacrificing my inclinations to my duty ?—a sacrifice I would indubitably make, were they to command it—*He interrupted me in his turn, and was so extravagant in his expressions, that I told him, *I was almost resolved never more to admit even of the friendly intercourse* which

which I consented to make the substitute of a foster one. He became composed, and our quarrel ended. You know my sentiments of Lord Budenall, and will suppose it would mortify me not a little to lose his acquaintance. Sensible, generous, and humane, are epithets as justly his, as handsome, graceful, and captivating, are Lord Osmond's.—Now could I draw comparisons,—and condemn the frailty of human nature, which never fails to be caught with the glare of superficial excellencies;—whilst the more admirable ones, the excellencies of the heart, are coldly praised,—but always neglected.—Ah!—How malicious!—how inconsistent I am!—Does not the beloved Henry possess the same good qualities that I commend in Lord Budenall?—Sure he does!—and in forming the most perfect—the most enchanting person in the world,—the hand of Heaven did not fail to make the soul worthy of its habitation.—Besides, have I not always allowed him to be master of every virtue?—Odd inconsistency I repeat,—thus to have changed my note, and instruct you to believe Lord Osmond's inferior to Lord Budenall's!—What strange caprices fall from my pen now that my heart is become the slave of an ardent passion!—You have the painful task, my Louisa, of reconciling the many contrarieties it pours forth, of expression,—of sentiment,—of feeling:—can I possibly inflict a greater punishment on you?—But to return. Who is this *worthy man* whom Budenall has appointed to be my husband?—Not Lord Osmond certainly;—oh, no! for there is not one in the house who suspects me to be the object of his love.—How rejoiced I am, that I again suspect it:—ah! was my brother to do as much!—Indeed I think Lord Pemberton changed;—I do not find him so gentle with me as he was formerly. When a young man marries, he imagines his consequence doubled:—his having a wife to govern, gives him the hint to exert an authority over sisters,—nieces,—servants,—in short, wherever he can be allowed to do so. My Lord was, and is, an excepti-

on to this almost general folly. I hope, when the novelty of *being a husband* is over, Lord Pemberton will re-assume his natural character, and be once more the amiable, tender, affectionate brother.—But I represent him, perhaps, more altered than he really is;—yet you can judge, from knowing the kind manner in which I was constantly used by him, how very striking the least difference in his behaviour must be to me.—From any other brother,—his present treatment would be called gentle and fond;—from Lord Pemberton, it is morose and indifferent.—Sometimes I think, that my apprehension of—I know not what—causes me to fancy all this, without having any true foundation for it.

After to-morrow I shall be entirely taken up in studying and rehearsing the part of Sigmunda; you must therefore excuse hearing from me,—till that disagreeable affair is over.—I believe I shall want courage;—but the idea of appearing very awkward without some degree of it, will inspire it.—Sure there is the sound of music!—It approaches—it is under my windows:—how extraordinary!—Certainly there is nothing so awfully pleasing as harmony at this late hour!—Our beaux are instituting at Windsor the customs of the Spaniards in serenading their ladies.—Strange animal I am! An unusual chill strikes through my whole frame—why this terror?—Ridiculous fool!—I cannot reason it away.—Were I as fond of indulging the gift of augury as you are,—I would expatiate an hour on the melancholy pre-sages of my heart;—a series of calamities which seem—The instruments are hushed—a loud talking—my God! I cannot go on—I must call Mournings to fit with me, whilst I get into bed;—yet, poor creature! I dismissed her long ago;—she is buried in the arms of sleep, and my silly fears shall not disturb her.—The music begins again,—my spirits revive—Heavens, what a charming voice!—I must listen;—’tis Osmond’s, Louisa—’tis my Osmond’s!—They have left my window—The words he
fung

sung I well remember to have admired long before I heard them from his lips.

“When first I saw thee graceful move,
Ah, me! what meant my throbbing breast!
Say, soft confusion, art thou love?
—If love thou art—then farewell rest!

With gentle smiles assuage the pain
Those gentle smiles did first create,
And, if thou canst not love again,
—In pity, ah!—forbear to hate.”

I am ashamed of having been so weak as to expose such causeless terror to you;—I cannot account for it any other way, than by having written myself into the *horrors*, which made me liable to every fearful impression:—yet that music, so much my delight, should give rise to any, is strange! I will take my leave, lest I should next imagine that some genii may enter my apartment, and transport me through the air, a thousand leagues off, to an enchanted isle;—or some evil goblin appear and descend with me to a subterraneous cave, the habitation of demons, or monsters, either of which methinks not more absurd than my first apprehensions were.

* * * * *

Saturday Noon.

We were curious to know to which of the *cavaliers* our acknowledgments should be directed, for having been so *gallant* this morning:—they would not satisfy us.—I thanked Lord Osmond for the pleasure I received, in hearing a very delightful voice, that I plainly distinguished to be his. He was all amazement!—sure I mistook!—I could not have formed such a conjecture!—he never sung! and repeated many of the like exclamations, which only tended to convince me, that I was very right in fixing on him my suspicions,—and that he deviated from truth in denying the charge.

About

About an hour ago, the Marquis begged to dance with me this evening.—I expressed my mortification at being engaged to the Duke of Suffolk. He threw uncommon meaning into his eyes; and was turning from me as if in high discontent—

“If, my Lord, the other Ladies change partners, which it is most probable to think they will, — I shall hope, in the course of the night, to profit of the favour you now offer me.”

“My wishes for your gratification are so abstracted from all interestedness, that I am hardly selfish enough to desire it might be the case;—I must think it will pain you, my Lady, to yield the Duke to another, *even* in a dance.”

“I cannot pretend to controul your opinion, Lord Osmond;—but it may err sometimes!”

“Does it on *this* occasion, my adorable, Lady Julia?” and he snatched my hand, while joy dilated his countenance.

“You do not deserve I should answer you;” and I left him.

* * * * *

Saturday Half past Eight

The ball is begun;—I have little pleasure in the thought of entering amongst the splendid throng, and have not yet made my appearance.—The first object that strikes my eyes on going in, I know will be Lord Osmond, seated next to, or standing near, the envied Lady who is to be the mistress of his hand for the night.—Perhaps *that Lady*—may be Charlotte Pelham!—Perhaps her cleverness will teach his heart to become congenial with hers!—His vanity—or gratitude may favour her wishes—and I shall be as much despised by him—as Lady Henrietta Marchmont is.—Disagreeable ideas!—Hated Suffolk, that is evermore the barrier to my happiness!—Be quiet, Mournies!—I will not be thus teased!—She is tormenting me to death to go down.—Aye, you may look cross, I care not.—She thinks

thinks that she is always to have me under the same command that she had me when I was a child !

But must I not be sunk very low in my own opinion, if I can entertain a thought of being *despised* by any man ? “ It was indeed,” you cry, “ a *slip* of your pen, to express one so little correspondent with the *pride* of the *Herbert's* ! ”—Well, Louisa, though I take the reproof (for you always told me I was a proud girl), I shall not behave to Lord Osmond as if I supposed it in his power to think meanly of me—I will preserve in my own person the female *dignity* that every woman of virtue ought to assume.—So !—my heart reproaches me now for my peevishness to poor Mournies !—“ Why, my good friend, are you impatient for my going down ? ”——“ The minuets will be over, and your Ladyship will not dance one.” “ Dear Mournies, what signifies my minuet !—Lady Mortimer likes to do things in a particular way, else we should have had no minuets till the ball was nearly finished, and there would have been fewer performed, which I think best.”——“ Certainly ! unless they are *well performed*.—Pray, my Lady, go down ! ”——“ I will not refuse you ;—but is Miss Edgcumb ready ?—We agreed to go in together.—Ah ! she appears ; and means to do great execution, no doubt, from the elegance of her habit.—How handsome she is !—Poor Sir James !

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Sunday Mornin'g, Three o'Clock.

For the sake of decency, perhaps, you think I ought to suppress this date, as it too plainly tells we have suffered the Sabbath to shine upon our revels. The French make no account of such encroachments ;—nay, their balls, plays, &c. are in preference given on Sundays ;—and, from my having lived some years amongst them, I am so far reconciled to the custom, as to imagine there can be no harm in enjoying on that day innocent amusements. I am by no means singular in the opinion ;
for

for every dancer was inspired with more life and spirit after twelve, than before,—and testified no scruples in indulging themselves in their recreation.

On going through a long gallery which leads to the ball-room from our apartments, (and which was magnificently illuminated for the occasion, and thrown open as soon as the minuets were ended,) Miss Edgcumb and I met Lord Osmond returning through it. He looked remarkably handsome; my companion made the observation as he approached us:—his dress was becoming, suited to the hot season, and the diversion which he intended to engage in. “You are very late, Ladies!” cried the Marquis. The *fluttering* beaux assembled in that room, mourn your absence;—but you have well employed the time,—“*you will teach the torches to burn bright.*” He returned with us to the door, and, seeing us met there by the Duke of Suffolk and Mr. Montague, retired as was his first purpose, while the gentlemen led us to our places. We were hardly seated, when Mr. Bishop (one of the masters of the ceremonies) informed me, *my minuet must be next, as the Duke of Suffolk had entreated that he may be allotted to dance it with me, and that the rules of precedence should be disregarded concerning him for that reason.* “However,” added he, “we should not have so punctually obeyed his Grace, had you entered earlier.” He offered me his hand; but, as we advanced half way up the room, the Duke of Suffolk met us, and with a *certain* air of gallantry (which never fails to excite admiration and encomiums from the Ladies), took my hand from Mr. Bishop, and led me to the top of the room. I dare say there was not a female present, exclusive of my family, and one or two intimate friends, who did not think me the happiest girl in the world. I am generally loath to expatiate on Suffolk’s praises,—but common justice demands it of me *here*:—his minuet was an exceeding fine one. —I do not know whether impartial judges would not even yield to him the *palm*, in preference to Lord Osmond;—I cannot,—for there is in my opi-

nion more ease in the Marquis's movement. Though the Duke's elegant figure premised how well he must dance; (I speak only of minuets; other dances I had seen him excel in before,) I confess I was struck at his performance; and exerted myself that I might not absolutely disgrace him. As we finished, I saw Lord Osmond standing at no great distance, opposite to me:—his face was flushed with indignation I thought, and my anxious fears instantly suggested that some *fracas* or other had happened. As we passed him in returning to my place, I asked *what was the matter?*—He made me no reply. Soon after I directed my eyes to the upper part of the room, and perceived him leading Lady Maria Harley to the spot I had quitted.—My fears of Charlotte Pelham directly vanished—a far more formidable rival stood forth to dispute with me the heart of Osmond.—Good heaven, what did I not suffer! I thought her beautiful, and that he gazed on her with eyes of transport—My jealousy fixed her to be the person to whom his hand would be dedicated for the night. “Delightful figure!”—“Admirable movement!”—“What grace!”—“What elegance he displays!”—These exclamations resounded in my ears. Ah! thought I, how solicitous he is to please his partner!—Did he ever take such pains when he danced with *me*?—I was disturbed from this reflection, by hearing Sir James Westbrook say, “A very pretty couple now on the floor—and well matched—do not you think so, Lady Julia?”—A wretch!—How I detested him! I pretended deafness to what he said;—and escaped the mortification of pronouncing “Yes.” After the Marquis led her to her seat, he stood some time by her. Numberless were *les yeux doux* that passed between them; and frequently were white teeth displayed by the reciprocal smiles they bestowed on each other.—At length Osmond stooped low, and whispered something in her ear.—I watched the motion of his lips;—they seemed to say, “I wish you to be my partner!” God knows what answer she made,—but he looked delighted

lighted and bowed.—In some minutes after, he left her.—He approached the place where I sat;—Lord Budenall officiously resigned his seat to him, pretending to go in quest of Westbrook, and point out to him some slight inadvertency he had committed in his department (a master of ceremonies). Osmond *blest the occasion that afforded him an opportunity of being so near me*; and, exchanging a look of expression with Budenall, took his place. “Your Ladyship spoke to me just now;—I was rather perplexed—and,—and—too much——Will Lady Julia repeat what she so condescendingly said?”

“It was of no consequence, my Lord;—scarcely remembered by me.—The minuets are just ended. I see Mr. Bishop leading up Almeria; hers, if I guess right, will be the last. As sister to the mistress of the ball, I was not privileged to dance so soon; I am indebted to you, my Lord Duke, for that distinction.” Suffolk, who was at my left hand, returned me a rapturous complimentary reply, which was for the first time agreeable to me, because Lord Osmond heard it.—Coquetry!--oh!--detestable!--but I was sadly grieved,---and full of resentment.---He led the way,---and I have already said reprisals on that head are justifiable. Lord Osmond seemed thunderstruck.—The Duke was called aside by some one.—After a minute’s pause, the Marquis recovered his speech. “Lady Julia, what am I to think of such tyrannic—such horrible treatment?” “Pretend not to *think at all* of me, my Lord;—my behaviour cannot affect you.”—“By heaven, Madam, it is no longer to be borne!—The *minion* who thus *plumes himself* on your preference, shall be humbled to the dust!—I have endured it too long.”—“Does your Lordship speak with the intention of terrifying me?” “Ha!--is this *bewitching* Suffolk so dear to you then?” “I hold you all in an equally indifferent light.—But let me tell you, Lord Osmond, the man who seeks a quarrel

quarrel on my account will make himself so hateful to me, that I shall ever shun him as my worst enemy, and will sooner encounter death than his presence."

"—“ I have done :—but let me implore that some time this night—I may say a few words in private to you ;—for mercy’s sake, *my dear Julia*,” (the charming appellation still vibrates on my ear,) “ grant me this !” “ What do you ask ?—The menacing tone you just now assumed—your inconsistent behaviour—No, my Lord,—indeed I cannot.”

“ Good heaven ! how disagreeable to you I must be !—But is there any impropriety in *what I ask* ?” —Before I had time to answer, Suffolk returned, and took my hand to lead me to my place. As I arose, I enquired of the Marquis, *who was his partner* ? He replied, “ The first Lady that wants one, —though I have little inclination to offer myself.” However, he did not seem so totally *insensible* on the occasion ;—for within four couple of me stood Lord Osmond with Lady Maria Harley ;—and, strange as it may sound after what had passed,—he played the lover to as much perfection to her, as he had done to me, though in a livelier manner.—Indeed I only judged from appearances, for not a syllable did I hear of any part of their conversation.

Sir John Benyon engaged me for the two following dances ;—as, at my request, Lady Mortimer proposed there might be a constant change of partners at the end of every second dance.

As Mr. Montague was leading me out of the cotillon-room, we were hastily followed by Lord Osmond. He held Lady Maria’s hand (for they made the opposite couple to Mr. Montague and me in the dance we had just finished). “ Lady Julia,” cried the Marquis, “ do you recollect your promise ?” “ None that I ever made your Lordship.” “ Indeed !—I will remind you of one in a minute.—Ladies do adapt their memories so much to their inclinations !—Pardon me,—but I cannot help” —“ Oh ! pray say no more ;—it is natural that you should

should find nothing but foibles in our composition:—each individual of your sex is so justly thought by us a *standard of human excellence*, that I am *only* amazed how you can condescend to *converse* with a female.” “Thank you for this severe sarcasm;—in an instant I will attend you.” He and his fair companion passed us, and entered the apartment thrown open for refreshments. My proud heart despised him at the moment.—What! shall I wait here in patient expectation of his coming half an hour hence, to cheer my drooping spirits with a few kind words, already hackneyed in his application of them to Lady Maria?—Shall I wait the minute he can best spare from her to devote to me?—Ah, never!—forbid it, pride!—This passed in my breast.—“Mr. Montague, let us go into the gallery, and seek Miss Edgcumb and my sisters; I believe they are there. My mother whispered me, that she was going to cards;—in that room the dancers have no business.” He caught my hand as if to detain me. “Lord Osmond said he would be back immediately;—he will be at a loss to find us.” “No matter;—he will console himself;—and I would rather find my sister and Emily,—than that his Lordship should find us.” “Indeed, Lady Julia, you in a great measure deserve the character that you have, of being very barbarous!—Good God! how much is that man cursed, who is so miserable as to love you!” “You speak not with your usual kindness;—but, greatly as your opinion wrongs me,—I forgive you.—one proof at least, that I am not that *inhuman savage* my good friends judge me to be.”—I need not tell you what polite speeches the gentle Frederick made me afterwards, to compensate for his uncivil one. We turned into the gallery, and beheld in one corner of it a very joyous group: those who composed it were Lady Percival, Almeria, and the eldest Miss Pelham; the Count de Belfield, Sir John Benyon, Mr. Bishop, and that laughter-loving creature Sir James Westbrook. We seated ourselves
amongst

amongst them, and joined in their conversation: they told us Lady Pemberton and Miss Edgcumb were dancing. Some little time after I saw Lord Osmond enter the gallery; curiosity and anxiety painted on his features. He begged Sir James to make room for him on the sofa where Westbrook and I sat, and made a slight attempt to get between us. "*Ah, ciel! quelle barbare!*" exclaimed the Baronet, drawing close to me. "Who could have conceived it?—No, no, good Lord Osmond;—be satisfied, and let other men enjoy some gratifications as well as yourself.—*Ma belle cousine* would never forgive me, if I resigned my place to you.—Poor girl!—I have often represented to her the inconvenience that might attend shewing so much fondness;—but, alas! there is no helping it, she says.—What will you do, dear Julia, if I am soon sent to America? Government thinks it a pity that *such* an officer should not be employed at so critical a juncture;—therefore it is not improbable but that I shall embark in a few weeks for the continent." "I beg pardon, Sir James; but it appears very *improbable* that you should be sent to America."—"Ah! you flatter yourself.—Pray why so?" "Because they no longer admit exiles there from hence;—and I believe you will go in no other capacity."—The laugh was against him for a minute;—but he did not spare me for it,—and I should have been obliged to quit the party in compassion to my temper, which his monkey-like tricks began to fret, if Miss Edgcumb had not appeared, and freed me from his ridiculous wit. He flew to her, and the Marquis took his seat.

"Well, Madam," cried he, "now I will remind you, that you were so gracious as to say I should have the honour of your hand in the course of the ball: how unkind of you, sweet Lady Julia, not to consent, two hours ago, to make me another promise, yet more essential to my happiness!—Let me again press that subject;—favour me
after

after supper when the company enter into the full enjoyment of dancing, and are too much engrossed to attend to any thing but their own diversion, favour me then—in the presence of Lady Mortimer—with your company for half an hour in this gallery.—My ever amiable—my most dear Julia, refuse not your Henry!—I can no longer linger *on* a life thus clouded with suspense!—Answer me, Madam;—may I hope for your concurrence?”

“—I am much at a loss, my Lord, what to say.—If I deny you, I am immediately charged with the titles of *barbarous---cruel--and tyrannical*;—I am thought perverse. How unjustly I merit such appellations, Heaven that knows my heart can tell!—But, to be sincere, I do not see why I should consent to this private conversation.—Your behaviour perplexes me—what can you have to say so important?” “Ah, Lady Julia, *what!*—Do you forget one particular night at Ranelagh?” “No certainly;—but I cannot think it possible that you mean to renew *that* subject;—your conduct ever since you came to Windsor has so directly contradicted”——Louisa, I had said too much—I trembled—my face felt hot from the blush that overspread it; as red a one diffused itself over the Marquis’s—He attempted to catch my hand;—I withdrew it from his effort;—joy notwithstanding sparkled in his eyes.

“My adorable Lady Julia! why this hesitation?—Ah, Madam! I can readily vindicate my behaviour—This is not an opportunity for it;—already are we observed.—Let me have the felicity I have begged for after supper; and”——Ere he had time to proceed,—or I to answer, Suffolk *pinned* himself to my sleeve; and Lord Osmond, finding there was no probability of getting rid of him, left us. To say the truth, Louisa, I was not sorry for the interruption:—my heart murmured against the Marquis’s apparent levity, in spite of his assurances “to vindicate it.”

it."—He also pleaded warmly for my agreeing to his request.—Thus agitated between conflicting anger and affection, I knew not how to act.—Besides, after the unguarded words that escaped me, I dreaded confirming too plainly to him the interest he had in my breast, by consenting to the meeting. His vanity, no doubt, led him to interpret in the most grateful sense what I had said; and can there be any thing under heaven more mortifying than to discover a passion for a man, whose self-sufficiency would suggest to him to take advantage of it, and wound me, by shewing his consequence in the eyes of another, whom his demeanour had already taught me to regard in the light of a rival?

A few minutes elapsed and I took my resolution:—it was, to assume a *nonchalance* to Lord Osmond, which could not fail to contradict any flattering impressions my heedless words might have caused on his vanity; and, if he again pressed for an interview, absolutely to deny him. Thus haughtiness and regard to my own delicacy (which I thought injured) determined;—a softer advocate attempted to plead in opposition to the harsh decree, but was instantly rebuked, and silenced.—We went to supper;—I looked for Lord Osmond:—not seeing him, I concluded he had taken his place in another apartment.—The next person my eyes sought after, was Lady Maria Harley:—they found her not, and there was no remaining doubt of her being seated at the side of the fluttering, inconstant Osmond—I recal that last epithet;—*he was constant*—as a partner, —though by no means so as a lover. Singular enough appeared the couple;—contrary to the prescribed rule, they danced always together before supper, and, once more I repeat,—seemed too happy with each other for my peace. I am prolix;—let your desire *that I should be minute* excuse it, if I tire you.

After we had risen from table, the Marquis once more joined me:—I engaged Emily Edgcumb in the conversation, and, notwithstanding his reproachful looks, gave him no opportunity of saying a syllable to me unheard by her. In his presence Mr. Temple begged me *to dance the next cotillon and the two following country-dances with him*. “Lady Julia,” exclaimed Osmond, “is it necessary to bring again to your remembrance that I am privileged to have the pleasure of your hand from your own consent?—Surely Mr. Temple will be refused!” “I hope not, my Lord;—you are not more ambitious than I am of the happiness I aspire to:—Lady Julia will determine.”

“If Lord Osmond had spoken in time, I certainly should as readily have danced with his Lordship as with any other partner.—I have observed the rule, and changed as regularly as I was desired.—Mr. Temple has *now* anticipated you, my Lord; and though I am really fatigued, and thought to dance no more,—I cannot refuse the honour you offer me, Sir.”—The impetuous Henry abruptly left us;—and I overheard him utter, “Death and confusion!—Belfielde says rightly, every woman is a coquette.”—When the cotillon finished, Lord Osmond (who was a looker-on) and Lady Maria Harley *stepped forth* in an allemande, which was very well performed. I overheard Lady Walpole exclaim, “if Lord Osmond had been a youth at the time of Mr. Stanhope’s residence abroad, Lord Chesterfield must have had him in his thoughts as a pattern, when he so constantly recommended to his son *to sacrifice to the Graces*.” After the allemande, Lord Osmond resigned Lady Maria to some other beau, and took Almeria for his partner. Whenever I met him in the dance, his looks were averted;—if he chanced to hold my hand in turning, &c. &c. he ceased to press it:—in short, cool indifference possessed every feature, and,

and, as Lady Maria was no longer the object of my jealousy, I began to fear I had gone a little too far. I gave over dancing, heartily wearied of it, but infinitely more of the agitations that had formed a chaos in my bosom the whole night. I caught a few minutes, when Lady Mortimer was secluded from the crowd, to tell her what had passed. After listening attentively, she laughed,—yet with a vexed countenance, however paradoxical that may sound; and answered, “You take pains to bring on the perplexities of which you complain;—yet, as they proceed from such *virgin* delicacy, I must not pretend to condemn you I suppose. Hark ye, Julia, as sure as you exist, you will *refine* away your happiness—my life for it, Osmond never more *troubles* you with his passion—Lady Maria Harley will be a tolerable substitute: if she is not so enchantingly lovely as you are, she is less proud. I speak the sentiments of Lord Osmond, depend upon it,—and now leave you to your reflections.”

“When I want a *consoler*, Caroline, you shall not be the person I fix on. Good Heaven, how unkind! Upbraid me as you may, I cannot think myself wrong—If I do lose the Marquis’s affections, I shall imagine there is more blame to be ascribed to my unlucky fate, than to my own conduct. This is no place to *enjoy those reflections* you consign me over to: but, as I mean to obey you, shall retire to my closet, and there give scope to them.” She would have replied, but I hastened from her, to conceal the emotions I did not wish she should be witness of.

On retiring through the gallery, I passed Lady Maria. “We are not to lose you yet, Lady Julia, I hope!” she said. I know not what answer I made: I intended it should be polite, and think it was; but my heart felt no very warm impressions in her favour at the moment.—This, for the sake of ingenuousness,

must be confessed. After a little while, I reasoned myself into great composure, and took up my pen; but a recapitulation of the past scenes has entirely destroyed it. I will not infect you with chagrin. Two hours have I spent in writing. A more delightful morning never blessed the universe; it gives me an inclination to enjoy it in a walk—Yet I require rest, and believe I shall find it more beneficial to go to bed. That prudent plan every creature else has followed; for the house is very quiet.

* * * * *

Sunday, Two o'Clock.

I have not seen the Marquis. Heaven knows whither he is gone;—I suppose to pay his *devoirs* to Lady Maria Harley, who lives ten miles from Windfor.

On Lady Pemberton's asking for him, Sir James said, *that he saw him from his window mount his horse about eight o'clock.*

I turned to Caroline, and *wondered* where Lord Mortimer was? "He was obliged," she said, "to go a little way off on business; but would soon be back." So you see, Louisa, they are not together, as I at first hoped.—Well, no matter!—I must bear what is to happen, and that without complaining. Be it ever so bad, it cannot be more dreadful than this state of perpetual anxiety and suspense.

To-morrow presents us with the Provoked Husband—Since I have forsworn *lamenting* the loss of my *faithless Corydon*, which I could fill quires in doing; and as I dare not make any thing serious my subject, lest I forget the *pious* resolution; I will employ a few moments which lie upon my hands, in telling you how the characters are cast of our next play.

Lady

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Lady Percival performs Lady Townley; Miss Edgcumb, Lady Grace; Miss Pelham, Lady Wronghead; Miss Walpole, Miss Jenny; Mrs. Ashley and Mrs. Stanley (a neighbour of Lady Mortimer's) condescend to the other two female parts. Lord Mortimer, I before mentioned, undertakes Lord Townley; the Duke of Suffolk, Mr. Manly; Sir James Westbrook, Count Basset (I tell him he will never lose the title); Lord Percival, Sir Francis Wronghead; Mr. Bishop, Squire Richard; Captain Walpole, John Moody. The Farce will be the *Deferter*: *Skirmish*, by Sir James; *Louisa*, by Miss Charlotte Pelham; and *Henry*, by Lord Seymour. I forget who are to be the other performers.

On Tuesday we dine at Lady Maria Harley's. What *delight* shall I take in the visit! My situation will be *enviable*! On Wednesday we are to have a *Fête Champêtre*, at which every one seems much pleased. Poor Lord Mortimer! what trouble he gives himself to gratify his guests! On Thursday, Caroline *treats* us with her appearance in Lady Betty Modish: Lord Pemberton is to play Sir Charles Easy; Miss Edgcumb, Lady Easy; Sir John Benyon, Lord Morelove; and Sir James, Lord Foppington—The creature is really a good support to my brother's stage, and does incomparably well; particularly in the *Coxcomb's* province: but then he takes so much merit to himself in consequence of his theatrical abilities, that there is no end to it when he begins his own eulogium, which is not seldom.—You will find a difference in my manner of writing of this cousin of mine. I have not forgiven him for many of his volatile speeches within these few days; and my pen cannot avoid venting a little of my acrimony.

I have

I have already told you, dear Louisa, that it will not be in my power to write to you again till after to-morrow se'nnight—Most mornings in the intermediate space will be taken up in rehearsals; and every moment I can spare must be dedicated to the unfortunate Sigismunda.—My own situation will cause me to feel hers but to sensibly. I wish Lord Osmond was not to be Tancred—and yet I should not be pleased either, were it otherwise—In short, I know not what to desire—but certain it is, I shall not find performing the part of one who feels the passion of love in its fullest force, and that for an object who feeds it by an equal return, a specific for my infatuation—but, ah! when that charming hero is represented by the very man whom I love to distraction, every tender word he addresses to me will make an impression—I shall forget they come from Tancred, and only remember they proceed from the lips of the incomparable Henry. Fleeting indeed will be my happiness; yet it must serve, after so ridiculous a mummery, to make me the more regret that this dear Osmond will in *reality* repeat those professions to another, to which I was but a shadow.—I see I cannot avoid running into the dismal style; but I will quit it in spite of inclination.

My eyes deceive me, or certainly I perceive Lord Osmond and Lord Mortimer by the Temple of Apollo!—Sure I do not mistake!—They are lost to my sight by some shrubs—it cannot be—I am in an error!—and yet I am not,—for now they appear again more plain.—It is they, my Louisa!—indeed it is!—Cruel Caroline—could you think it of her, my sweet friend?—Hope revives;—they have, perhaps, made me part of their conversation.—Adieu, Louisa! the business of dressing calls me—I will be more studious in that point this day than ever—I will

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—I will consult my glass with uncommon assiduity—I banish all pride—all cold reserve from my bosom—and if, by any delicate effort, I can make one grasp at happiness, I will secure it.

Ever yours,

JULIA HERBERT.

N. B. A letter is here omitted from Sir Charles Montague, which informs the Marquis that Lord Beaumont is out of danger, but not well enough to admit of his departure from Beaumont-Hall; which makes him uneasy, as he is impatient to revisit Sommerville-House. A letter is also omitted from Lady Louisa Sydney.

END OF VOL. I.

